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GROSVERB

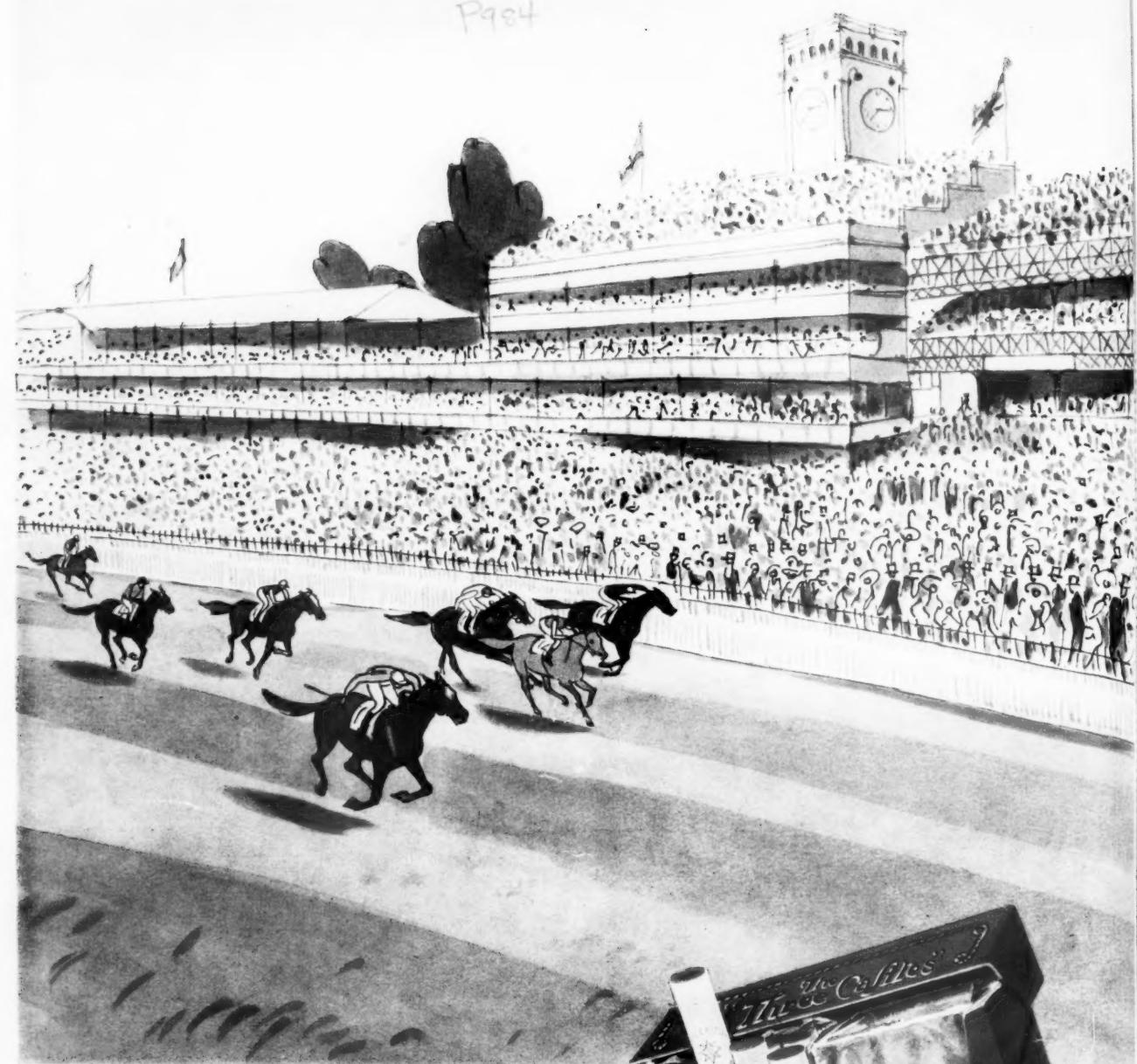
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Like most good things in life

"THREE CASTLES"

cost a little more



4'3
for twenty

B-13



ISRAEL'S plan to grow eucalyptus trees in the neutral zone with Jordan seems more humane than aggressive. It's where we all look like catching the next cold in the head.

More Queues at Woburn

WHEN a donkey halted on the edge of a crevasse in a blizzard on the Jungfraujoch, thus saving the life of the Duke of Bedford who had somehow got 11,000 feet up in connection with a TV programme, it received as a reward "extra helpings of hay." No news, so far, of extra helpings of corn for His Grace's publicity men.

On, on

MILESTONES of progress flash by. A recent one was marked by the announcement that the Transport and Salaried Staffs' Association had met Transport Commission representatives to discuss "the first pay claim since the raising of the Bank Rate."

Forthcoming Attraction

COMPETITION for world attention grows fiercer, with currency, Little Rock and Syria fighting for supremacy just



now. It was obviously the right thing for General Chang Chun, special envoy of Marshal Chiang Kai-shek, to get back in the running by telling a Tokyo press conference that the invasion of China was "coming soon."

Alarm and Despondency Note

OFFICIALS should use their jargon sparingly. Many people were thrown needlessly into depression last week when they received a Central Office of

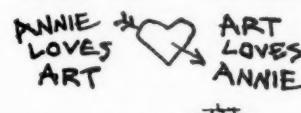
Information letter beginning "As in former years, the Central Office of Information, on behalf of H.M. Treasury, has produced a poster illustrating the breakdown of the National Budget."

No Chances

GAMBLING is now severely frowned upon in the U.S.S.R. Discredited leaders passing the time with Russian roulette are expected to see that all chambers are loaded.

Small Beginnings

PUBLICATION by Beaverbrook Newspapers of *Books and Art*, described by the *Daily Express* as "a new stimulant to a full and intelligent life" and an example of what the parent firm was



doing "to give expression to the mounting public interest in the lively arts of our time," didn't prevent the *Express* from using their old footnote explaining what U.N.E.S.C.O. stood for.

Double It Next Time

No one seems to have explained to the London Transport spokesman who

praised the public for accepting the latest fare rise with complacency that the public was simply taking a lead from London Transport.

No Joke

YOUNG men "of brilliant academic distinction," says a P.E.P. survey, are



being refused jobs in industry "because they have no sense of humour." Industrialists consider themselves vindicated in this by the numbers of young men of brilliant academic distinction who don't find it funny.

Name Makes News

THE situation in Arkansas remains unclear. All that emerges solidly is that after all this no one can expect to impress by knowing how to pronounce it.

U. Heep, M.P.

MR. GRIMOND struck a novel note of political modesty when he told his supporters that the Liberal party was poor, weak and short of votes. But to add "and we have no Messiah to lead us" carried unobtrusiveness too far.

Who Gave You That Name?

WHEN "Atlas," intercontinental missile, In Florida last week (unasked) exploded, The shock was felt as far away as this isle, Although in fact the warhead wasn't loaded.

Let airy christeners of bombs and rockets
Abandon labels classical and noble—
When Atlases start going off half-cock, it's
An odds-on chance the next bang will be global.



Annus Irae

(The B.B.C., broadcasting "preparatory warnings" to observers of the International Geophysical Year, said "There is no cause for alarm.")

YEAR of wrath, new ills foreboding
Cosmic secrets now decoding,
loud with premature exploding;
(but there is no cause for alarm).

Launched from Texas to Wyoming
"Aerobees" round heaven are
roaming,
by mistake on London homing
(but there is no cause for alarm).

Down below, the air's a-buzz. Inspired by prods from Mr. Cousins, workers swarm and strike in dozens
(but there is no cause for alarm).

While the prophets' observation
of a rocketing inflation
stirs the Chancellor's indignation
there is no cause for alarm.

Eastern seers draw fresh conclusions
from eclipses and intrusions.
Skies are full of strange Ilyushins.
(But there is no cause for alarm).

Year of wrath, such creatures spawning,
who of your unwelcome dawning
wants "preparatory warning"
when there is no cause for alarm?

P. E. C.

THE RISING TIDE OF LIBERALISM

SIR,—There was a time when I, too, believed that Liberals and Conservatives had much in common and might usefully co-operate against the menace of Socialism. The story of Suez has taught me that the old Toryism is not yet dead. As long as Mr. Selwyn Lloyd, the Foreign Secretary responsible for Suez, is still in office, I do not see how any Liberal can give a vote for a Conservative candidate.

SIR,—The great fault of the Government was that it failed to finish the job at Suez. Mr. Selwyn Lloyd was not loyally supported by his colleagues. As long as those who let Mr. Selwyn Lloyd down are still in office I do not see how any Liberal can give a vote for a Conservative candidate.

SIR,—The action of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in raising the bank rate is both calamitous and necessary. Never was the Liberal party more united than in its determination both to condemn and to support this ill-timed measure.

SIR,—The Liberal party has long been demanding a vigorous policy towards inflation. We will not be content to tinker with the problem. What we demand is a policy that tackles the evil at its roots. A united Liberal party demands a drastic pruning of Government expenditure.

SIR,—The Liberal party is not afraid to face unpleasant facts. Economy there must be, and that economy must be ruthless. But a united Liberal party unhesitatingly condemns any reactionary proposals of a Tory Government which would deal a blow to the social services or to the standards of living of the people.

SIR,—The Liberal Party must not ignore the dangers of a national resurgence towards Liberalism. The millions of potential Liberals in this country are in their present state because they are disillusioned not with the Tory or Socialist policies but with the unsavoury level of politics in

general. Owing to the high standard of its Parliamentary representatives the Liberal Party is at the moment in a position of strength in this regard. It is our duty to be extremely exacting in our choice of candidates; otherwise the increase in our number of representatives will be accompanied by a dilution of their excellence. Disillusionment with the Liberal Party would indeed be total disillusionment.

DID IT HAPPEN?

With a bow
to the
*Evening
Standard*

SIR,—Toryism is based on expediency. Liberalism is based on principle. The Government, instead of doing its duty has preferred to play for popularity at the polls. This apology for a policy Liberalism is united in repudiating.

SIR,—Toryism is based on expediency. Liberalism is based on principle. The unpopularity of the Government, as evidenced by recent by-elections, has shown beyond a shadow of doubt that it no longer possesses the support of the electorate. Such a Government has forfeited the moral right to govern.

SIR,—The Liberal party is a democratic party. The recent election at Gloucester shows that no more than four voters out of five of those who recorded their votes were willing to give them to other candidates. No less than one voter in five supported the Liberal candidate. Those who expect us to abandon our Liberal faith because, deceived by mass propaganda, an ephemeral majority of the electorates in a fit of passing hysteria gives more votes to other candidates, live in a fool's paradise. The true voice of the people will not have been heard until Liberal candidates have been returned at the head of the polls. It is to such a voice alone that the genuine democrat can pay attention.

DID IT REALLY HAPPEN?

YES

NO

Put a tick against your choice in the space above. Keep this panel until the next election, when the answer will be given.

C. H.

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BRIGHTON FRONT

Tuning Note '57-58

By CHARLES REID

CUT the cables, knock out the chocks, do whatever else the metaphor dictates and let Musical Season 1957-58 slide down the slipways, bunting overall, newly-cracked champagne dripping from her bows, agents, artists' managers, performing rights accountants and spontaneous bouquet planners.

Auditions are on, hell for all. They start at ten, to the distant trump

of vacuum cleaners, in ex-mission halls and disused ethical churches, where the daylight that falls from roof-traps is the colour of dirty parchment.

The impresario sits out in front between a tight-haired secretary and a toothless junior partner, both of whom keep their profiles worshipfully turned towards him like acolytes in an Egyptian tomb painting. The impresario's face is modelled in milk chocolate, his pelisse collared in astrakhan. He smokes cigars

because nobody has told him yet about the new freudfix, that cigar-smoking is a laughable virility ploy.

Ten young women leave their mothers or young men in small motor-cars in the side street, telling them to keep their fingers crossed. Slipping off shoulder furs and fluffing their back hair with unthinking fingers, they have successive goes at a Mozartaria, *Martern aller Arten*.

Aria did I say? Wrong.

Martern aller Arten is a steel frame job. Girders of semiquavers shoot high above the skyline, obliterating evening and morning star alike. Only spidermen are safe up there. This is one of twenty numbers the Musicians' Union talk of declaring black unless danger money is paid and larynx replacements are provided in buna rubber. The idea ultimately is to have all such things sung synthetically by Hymie the Electronic Thrush who should be installed backstage everywhere by 1960.

Making noises like distraught peahens the ten young women pick their way to earth from the Mozartian heights and put their shoulder furs on again. Somebody says they'll be hearing later. "You will find the RIGHT JOB with London Transport," a poster tells them on their way out. "There are so many worthwhile ones to choose from."

On an underpinned concert grand in Malthusa's pink-lined penthouse, Odin Hammerfest anneals, rasps and drills holes in Thalberg's Fantasia on *La Sonnambula*. He means to play this, or he'll know the reason why, to the Hunstanton Dodecaphonics, who were nagged by Malthusa into giving him a recital date.

Malthusa is a girl with indigo quoits round her eyes and a jangle of Benares ware on her wrist. At the moment she and her chaise-longue cannot be seen for a pillar of Panatella smoke. She says: "It's not your playing that worries me, my poppet. You have Cherkassky's left-hand, Artur Rubinstein's right. Your fourth fingers are strong as meat hooks. Michelangeli has nothing on you for soul. Katchen bites his nails with envy at your rubate. Your octave glissandos turn Graffman green. Thing that does worry me is your platform appearance. Other night you sneaked



"Go easy on the gold leaf. That's a begging letter."

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on glancing over your shoulder and sliding your palms along the back wall. People don't want to hear a man play Dallapiccola's *Paradigm Dialectic* who looks like a delinquent bath-attendant. Come to that, people don't want to hear Dallapiccola's *Paradigm Dialectic* at all. "And then your face. So moist and white. When handled, bits break off. Make-up's the answer, royal pancake or ducal enamel. Take desiccation capsules twenty-four hours before a recital so the sweat won't break through. *Front perlé* is OUT this season.

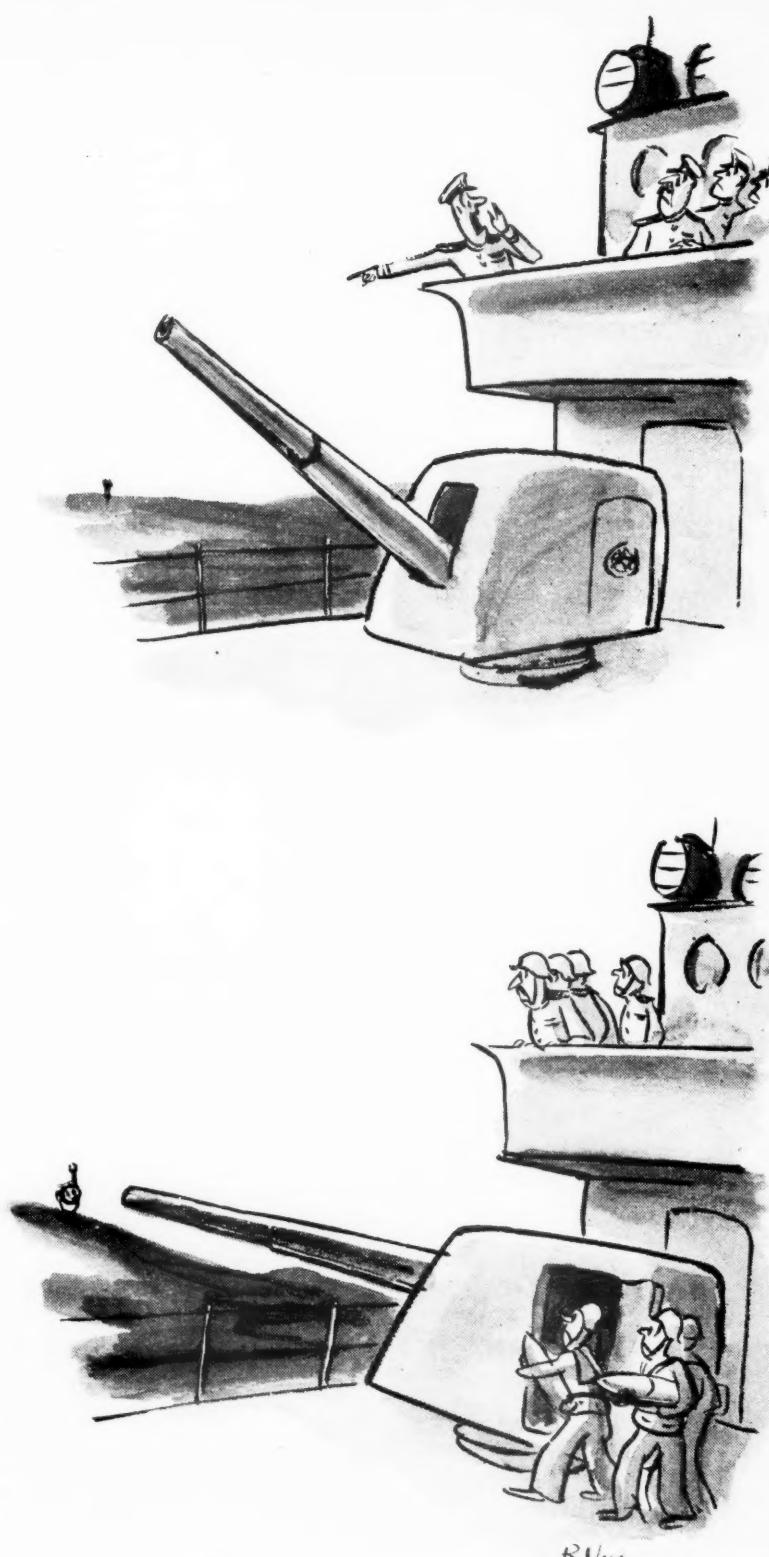
"And why can't you smile? There's a man in Bond Street will fix you a twenty-eight-tooth smile, guaranteed washable, doesn't fray or sag, in fourteen days. You go about with your face in a Duralumin joyclamp, shammy-lined, easy to wear, and think none but happy, humorous thoughts. Thoughts, for example, of Sir Malcolm Sargent conducting the G minor Symphony, Sir Thomas Beecham the Choral Symphony, Mr. X any symphony at all.

"At the end of a fortnight you have a smile as durable as a cast-iron pineapple. This you keep focused sideways on the audience. They'll lap up your *Pathétique* Sonata like Offenbach. That *Catacombs* thing by Moussorgsky will give them sympathetic giggles. This way you'll de-gloom your music. High time. Your public were beginning to sit with their hands dangling between their knees, their eyes like something in aspic."

Orchestras are finding their way back to the Festival Hall.

Anything been done about those platform lights? Not a thing. White shafts play vertically on the brave, the bald and the thinning. Eyes are gouged out and become black shadow sockets. Everybody is presented by the L.C.C.'s lighting engineers with bleached checkbones. The watered silk lapels of solo fiddlers wear a rippled look. This, on top of the gouged eyes, turns the most eminent solo fiddlers into waiters from cafes on Margate front!

Things are a little better at the Albert Hall because of this hall's beguiling ventriloquial ways. Not for ten years, however, have I heard anything to touch the night when Set Svanholm was dogged through *Lohengrin* and *Siegfried* excerpts, note for note, half a bar time-lag all the way, by an emasculated



half-brother hiding behind curtains in the royal box.

Echo did you say?

But no. The acoustical novelties I have in mind are the work of famuli, little heliotrope men bred in test tubes at the Royal College of Music; they have slurs for brows and eyes as empty as minims. Between concerts they live among cobwebs and staff tomato plants between the hall's tin ceiling and glass roof.

The neatest thing the famuli have done recently was to siphon the tone out of a concerto piano at the Proms and leave nothing but the muted rat-tat-tat of its mechanical action, a pleasant drum-fire effect that sent one's mind back to tense days before the Gustav line. Between movements I did all a critic could. That is to say, I sent a dozen extra cans of ammo across to Benno Moiseiwitsch, strung my scouts further out along the flanks and grinned cynically as the alerted enemy sent up star shells.

The piano is not the only instrument that has to be watched. Harps can be every bit as psychotic. A harp that hasn't been regilded flies into a fit, gets its pedals crossed and snaps strings at fifteen-minute intervals. This continues until a technician in cap and steel spectacles comes rushing along with placatory gestures and a square yard of gold-beater's skin.

Bassoons, too. I know a frail, choosy bassoon kept together by string, zinc wire and adhesive tape. Sent to the factory for new joints, pituitaries and



key-springs, he refused to come out of his case. The bouquet departed from his tone. In exasperation they anointed him with shark's liver oil. At the finish he won out, left the factory unrepaired, his zinc wire and adhesive tape a-flaunt, his bouquet restored, his manner vindicated, tranquil, defiant.

French horns are even more temperamental than bassoons. But a way has been found of dealing with them.

The typical French horn, if it plays at all (on the whole they don't), tends to popple, belch, burst and brattle. Of these practices poppling is the most detestable. A popple resembles a heifer's hiccup, which isn't the sort of thing Mozart had in mind. Hence the annual de-poppling ritual in the forecourt of the Royal Academy of Music.

First the stacked horns are gone over

with a geiger counter and water diviner's rod to determine the probable number and strength of popples inhering. Then Sir Adrian Boult, in surplice and mortarboard, asperges them from a silver pail with solution of crotchetts, sforzandi and tenor clefs in brine, what time the appropriate exorcism formula as compiled by Ebenezer Prout is intoned and the Hugowolfcubs' Choir, led by Anna Russell, do their best by Stainer B Flat.

And so, in one way or another, a new musical season gets moving. I do what I can to skip out of the way. But that is not to be. I am a critic and therefore committed, caught up. I go sliding down the slipway with the beflagged hulk.

That isn't a popple you hear. It is my own bark of despair.

Intimations of Ingenuity

"Schoolchildren are astounding their teachers with their super-intelligence . . . a boy of seven . . . knew the right answers to problems on astrology that he could not possibly have read," Dr. Thomson told me . . . "I believe Strontium 90 is responsible." —*Sunday Dispatch*

THE kiddies came a-crowding from the old school building
(Glass and aluminium, with its panels painted red),
And every kiddy there had a penetrating stare,
A high white forehead and a bulging head:
And I lingered lovingly as one wee laddie
Ran up laughing to his waiting daddy
And, smiling sweetly at him, softly said:

"Don't stop them testing the A-bomb, Daddy,
Don't go listening to foolish fears,
Don't go stopping our Strontium-90—
It's far more fruitful than at first appears.
It's making us the brightest children ever,
It's making us preternaturally clever,
It's making us intelligent beyond our years.

Only this morning teacher was telling us
He's not seen nothing like the brains we've got.
Tommy's I.Q. is 102,
And he's at the bottom of the B-stream lot.
On all the rest of us the chap's report is
We're way up well in the 140s,
Which is neo-genius as near as not.

So don't go stopping our strontium, Daddy,
You're only lessening the country's wealth,
Cutting the Russians' kinder repercussions,
Preventing the Pentagon's doing good by stealth.
The children are crying for their strontium ration,
And unless we get it in the good old fashion,
We'll just have to have it on the National Health."

P. M. HUBBARD

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Fin de Saison



Panic-Stricken Mothers

By KAY MACAULIFFE

WE met in an East End playground, one hundred shabby women, our faces, bare of make-up, looking wan in the early morning light. A dozen policemen stood together, swinging their truncheons and fidgeting in unfamiliar uniforms, among a jumble of camera gear, electricity cables and battered prams. The women formed into groups, exchanging greetings and photographs; this was an experienced film crowd who had worked together many times before.

"Hope they shoot us early, don't you, dear?" A worried-looking woman approached me, holding by the hand a small child dressed in scarlet.

"Now, Betty, don't you move out of this playground, there's a good girl." The child moved away, and her mother pulled my arm.

"Move back a bit, dear, we don't want to be seen. They won't use you again if you're seen." As we moved out of camera-range the director appeared at an upstairs window of the school, carrying a megaphone.

"Good morning, ladies. You all look very smart this morning." We laughed dutifully.

"Very full of himself to-day, isn't he?" Betty's mum's eyes were fixed attentively on the window but her hands, out of sight in the crowd, worked incessantly at a long strip of knitting.

"Now, ladies, don't herd, you're not sheep, you know! Ha! Ha!" The director's hearty voice boomed over the megaphone. "Jim! Give out the babies!"

A dyspeptic man with gleaming teeth and spectacles circulated among us distributing large dolls wrapped in shawls, which were received reluctantly by the younger women.

"Now, ladies, your attention if you please!" yelled the director. "You are all panic-stricken mothers. Your children are shut up in this school with a gangster. Jim! There's a gap there. Fill it."

Jim ran about between us like a sheep-dog, breaking up the groups of chattering women, who herded together as soon as his back was turned.

"Now, ladies, surge up to the policemen!"

We surged without enthusiasm.

"This is going to be murder on me feet," said Betty's mum, joining on another ball of wool.

"Now, once again—and scream, ladies! Your children are in danger! Scream, ladies, scream!"

We screamed, but the director screamed louder.

"Jim! Jim! There's a woman hitting a policeman with her baby!"

The indefatigable Jim rushed up to the erring mother and took her doll tenderly in his arms. The girl straightened her aching back and glared at a too-friendly policeman.

"Serve him right," said Betty's mum, knitting vigorously. "You watch *him*, dear."

Over and over again we surged and screamed, and the morning was half gone before the director was satisfied.

"Splendid, ladies, splendid!" he boomed, as we dropped exhausted to the ground. "Now a distracted mother will try to save her child. Console her, ladies!"

"He'll be worn out if he carries on like this all day," said Betty's mum, as we got reluctantly to our feet. Indeed, before the distracted mother's glycerine tears had been renewed for the last time and a perspiring Jim had herded his hundred panic-stricken mothers into position for the final take, even the director was drooping.



"When you gave that first sneeze back in May, I bet you didn't have a clue what it would all lead to."

We returned from lunch to find a fair boy lounging at the window.

"This is a gangster!" yelled the director, with renewed energy. "He's going to shoot your children! You're dumb with horror!"

"Thank goodness!" said Betty's mum. "My throat's raw with all this screaming."

The gangster put down his book and picked up a gun.

"Now, recoil like this, ladies," the director's face took on a look of anguish, and he reeled back from the window. One hundred faces were raised obediently, and one hundred women reeled back in silence.

"Once more, ladies, and let's have a bit more anguish."

"Some people are never satisfied," said Betty's mum. "Can you see Betty,

dear?" But no little scarlet figure was in sight.

We recoiled for the last time, and a stolid little boy appeared at the window.

"He's your son! Panic, ladies, panic!" urged the director. Wearily we panicked, calling up to the little boy, who gazed down unmoved from the window.

"I told her not to leave the playground. Where can she be?" Betty's mum was almost in tears.

"Now, this is the last shot, ladies, so let's have plenty of panic!" yelled the director.

"There she is!" I pointed to a little scarlet figure.

"Thank God!" cried Betty's mum, and with the lines of worry smoothed from her forehead she raised a carefree face to register panic for the last shot.



Hollowood

Me and Electronics

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

AS to tape-recording glasses and ash-trays to give a lift to *Titus Andronicus*, I know nothing beyond what Peter Brook has been telling his Sunday readers. But it does strike me that such effects are child's play to handle on the night, compared with some I know. If your cueing goes wrong and you get an ash-tray instead of a glass, it's going to be a sharpish critic who spots it. Especially if it's a glass ash-tray. But when you're under the village hall stage with two dog-barks, a door-knock, church bells, a car halting on gravel, an overture, two lots of interval music, a play-out and The Queen; and when you've a choice of seven buttons to press, and a failing torch, and a small part to play in Act Three, the margin of error widens.

Also—not that I want to make excuses—I had an electrician lying on me, fanning an overloaded power-point with his hat.

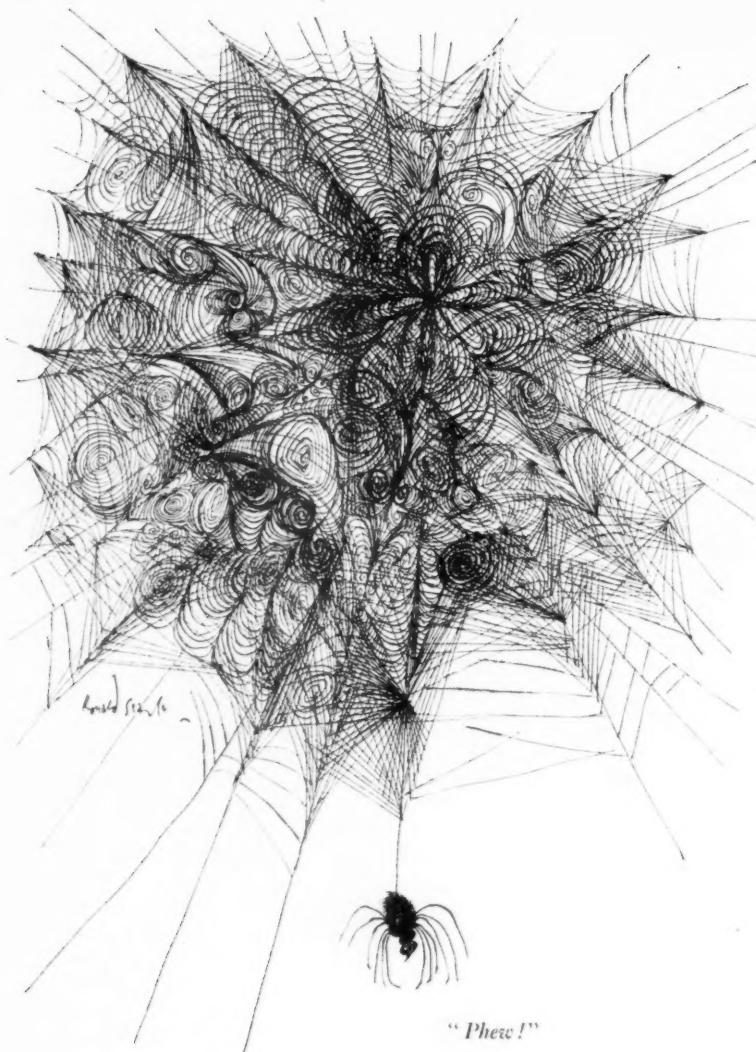
Mr. Brook wasn't specific about how he recorded his ash-tray. I can't imagine he had half the trouble I did recording my dog. One is seldom more conscious of the stupidity of the average dog than when getting it to bark into a microphone. Sniffings and lickings, yes. But they only come out on the tape as "SNRUMPF-SNRUMPF-SKLULFLE - THWOLSHK - OLSHK - OLSHK." Even *Titus* audiences wouldn't stand for

that. Then I remembered that no one could come to the house without my dog barking, and I waited all day. But it was Sunday, and no one came. After lunch I switched the set on and stole down the drive, and came back noisily, with a funny walk, like a suspicious character. "Row-Row! Row-Row-Row!" said the dog. Excellent. But when I played it back it went "Row-Row! Dong! Row-Row-Row! Dong!" I know experts can do wonders with cutting, but I haven't heard of one who could separate a dog-bark from a grandfather clock striking two. It was a week before I got the dog. It was when I was driving up and down outside the kitchen window trying to get a car halting on gravel. I was so relieved that I didn't mind re-recording the car noise. But the dog, naturally I suppose, didn't realize that I didn't want him this time, and in the end I had to take him up the road to a friend. Then I came back and did a well-planned, thoroughly painstaking car halting on gravel, even to the faint squeak of brakes and the door-slam. I knew it was absolutely right. We sound-recordists develop an instinct. I was saying as much to my wife, and she said "By the way, did you know you'd left your recorder on? But it's all right. I switched it off."

Of course I don't believe all that

stuff about a genuine sound coming out like something quite different. All this talk about men rattling peas in a drum to simulate storm, and so on. I would always record an actual storm, if one was handy. The same with the Act Two door-knock for this play. I placed the microphone strategically on the inside front-door mat, stole out, counted ten to isolate the effect on the tape, and rapped smartly. The door opened at once and Mrs. Crawston, whose day it was for doing the hall, said "Oo, it's you, sir, you gave me quite a start; the door wasn't locked, it sticks with the damp." I wasn't entirely discouraged, because I could possibly have cut everything out after the knock. What I couldn't cut out was Mrs. Crawston's button boots crunching over the mat—a splendid impression of a forest fire in angry bursts on a half-mile front.

I didn't worry about the bells. We have them every Sunday morning in our village. But as the church is some way off I took the precaution of turning up the microphone intake to maximum volume. Act One, the church-bells act, was supposed to be Christmas Day; we had a splendid snowy backcloth, seen through the vicarage window, and the scene-painter, a policeman whose chief value to the Society was that you could always be sure of finding the claw-hammer in his truncheon pocket,



insisted that I dropped the church bells effect on the second and third nights. He said the sound of the cuckoos made him feel a fool.

Most of the company gave me disapproving looks when I didn't turn up at the hall until the set was up and painted. "I've been all week recording the music and effects," I told them defensively. I could see them adding up in their minds the total time occupied by two dog-barks, a door-knock, church bells, and a car halting on gravel. I didn't bother to explain. I'd show them.

I connected the set up, and asked the leading man to give me the cue for the dog-bark. "If the train's on time she should be here any minute," he said sullenly. I pressed the button with a flourish and my wife's voice roared into

the middle of a telephoned grocery order, with some rather acid comments on last week's sliced ham. But, as I explained, I shouldn't be likely to have the wrong tape in position on the actual night. It was a result of the last-minute tizzy I'd got into with my piano recording of *The Queen*. I'd kept getting an ash-tray into it (following a distinguished precedent, I realize now); it shook off on to the strings with the vibration of my opening bass roll. In succeeding versions (a) two jets flew low through "Send her victorious," (b) my wife came in and asked if I had half a crown for the man who'd come to empty the cesspool, and (c) the gardener banged on the window pretending to want directions about pyrethrums but actually curious to know why I should be sitting indoors on a hot afternoon

giving endless performances of the national anthem.

On the night I was confident, though I wished I wasn't in the play as well as under it. I was playing the doctor, and had to enter with a stethoscope round my neck at the ready. I think it was this that upset me. The only way to be sure of having personal props when you want them is to have them all the time, and as I had to operate in a very confined space on all fours, with this electrician constantly fanning with his hat, the stethoscope swung among the tape-recorder controls a good deal. During the first two acts I was able to ignore it. But in the third its significance grew; it reminded me that my responsibilities didn't end with two dog-barks, a door-knock, church bells, and a car halting on gravel; I should presently have to straighten my wig, back out, climb on a kitchen table in the wings, descend three carpeted stairs with doddering dignity and say "Well, Mrs. Lovell, I think your husband's suffering from some slight cardiac complaint."

So I was unnerved enough, without suddenly realizing something which I had quite incredibly overlooked up to now, viz., that my cue to enter was a dog-bark, and that I should have to give it, thus being in two places at once.

There was nothing to do but explain to the electrician, tell him which button to press, and rush for the kitchen table. Luckily, he was a man not easily ruffled, actually a rather pleasant stockbroker, and the dog-bark was timed to the second. It was as I spoke the word "cardiac complaint," in the full glare of the front-of-house spots, that I realized something else. Ten feet more tape, or about the time when I should be packing away my stethoscope and saying that Mr. Lovell ought to avoid all excitement, the recorder would go into my opening bass roll of "God Save The Queen." It was the sort of effect, coming in the middle of an act, which could prove distracting.

I was casting about feverishly in my mind for a bit of ad-libbing to carry the situation off ("I didn't know your husband was a pianist—has he been learning long?") when all the lights went out. The stockbroker had had to stop fanning the power-point and the fuse had gone. It was providential, really.

How's Your Orphan Goldfish?

By ALEX ATKINSON

I SUPPOSE even to-day few people beside myself have a white rat with two wooden legs *and* a hearing-aid, but I'd be the last person in the world to boast about it. Nor do I wish to cast any shadow over the glory due to those people who rescued a stray terrier from destruction seven years ago and are now using it as a seeing-eye dog for a blind greyhound found wandering in the streets of Doncaster. All I'm saying is that this kind of thing is going on all the time throughout this pleasant land of ours, which is probably one of the strongest reasons why nobody but the occasional madman has thought of trying to invade our shores since the time of William the Conqueror. A nation of poodle-kissers, corgi-huggers, dressers of pekes in tartan cardigans, saviours of ailing jackdaws, pony-worshippers, chimp-fanciers, pigeon-crammers and whisperers into the ears of pussy-cats, we have been left respectfully alone for centuries, and therein surely lies our strength.

All the same, I can't stand by and let these people with the blind greyhound steal *all* the limelight. I'll grant that both it and its guide-dog looked *fairly* woebegone to me in the picture I saw in the paper the other day, but they have absolutely nothing on my rat Whiskers. He looks so miserable sometimes I can hardly bear to read aloud to him before he says good night. I love to see patient misery in a dumb friend's eyes, tinged with the endearing expression of gratefulness that only an animal can achieve. It reminds me how utterly dependent they are, how helpless they'd be without our continual prying into their affairs.

Whiskers was found—ah, blessed day!—wandering in the streets of New Brighton with a pronounced limp and a rather nasty cough. Some of his fur was singed. He'd been knocked into by a great big bus, and some over-playful puppy-dog had chewed away part of his ear. I happened to pass by as a group of bravely-smiling ladies and gentlemen were squatting in a circle, poking at him with their fingers and asking him how he felt. "Poor little lamb, it's a shame," one lady said, and that just about summed the situation up.

Naturally enough I took him home

to Surrey wrapped in paper. My chief thought was that he'd make a perfect companion for my one-winged starling, Raymond. I was dubious about what kind of reception he'd get from Sal, the elderly mastiff bitch with an aluminium lip whom I've mercifully kept alive for fifteen years with injections and the milk of human kindness, for she is inclined to be irritable at times on account of the fact that she's somehow lost the use of her muscles and has to be wheeled about everywhere in a cardboard box. Fortunately she took to Whiskers at once and, with a little persuasion, even consented to be fed from the same bottle.

But oh, what a labour of love it was to preserve that teeny rat! No sooner had I performed the first operation and fitted him with one wooden leg, than he went suddenly deaf in both ears and began to double up for hours at a time with severe abdominal pains. That was just before his second leg went wonky on him. Many and many a time during those first few months I went to bed quite worn out after my ministrations. Often and often I had to console myself with the knowledge that but for me poor little Whiskers might be lying in some unmarked grave, beyond the reach of human interference.

He was very brave, as all my dumb friends are. Never once did he complain. Even to-day, with one leg a fraction longer than the other three and his contact lenses still inclined to smart, he gamely stumbles about in his little cage, or snoozes in my pending tray for press photographers, with barely a hint of fretfulness and never an angry look. Sometimes he bites casual strangers, but that's because they just don't understand.

I'm getting on in years myself now: I shan't see eighty again. In the streets of which town, I sometimes ask myself, will *I* be found wandering? I've devoted myself to prolonging the lives of maimed and wretched animals: my little house is murmurous with the grateful sounds of half-burnt owls who fell down chimneys, horses who lived too long to be of further service, dogs in splints, cats in bathchairs, sparrows soft in the head through falling out of nests, bandaged ferrets, donkeys with rickets, partially eaten mice, mad bees, rheumatic

otters, snakes that people trod on, lambs with the staggers, poms with high blood pressure, and a pig with three false teeth and a cleft palate. Two questions face me now. Firstly, who will take me in and care for me, poor broken old shambling bundle of bones and breath that I am, and ease my last few darkening days? What kindly golden-haired retriever will leave two thousand pounds in his will that I may be brushed and fed and jollied along and given a stick and forcibly kept alive until the very last unimportant squeak is squeezed out of me? And secondly, how many good and shining souls will come forward and offer to see that Whiskers gets his indigestion tablets after every meal? Or make him a paper hat for his birthday every year? Or help him across the road? Or be his trusted friend? Or mend his boots?

Thousands, thousands, I am glad to say. For whatever else may be said of us, we know what animals are for. That's something nobody can take away from us.



"Experts say: 'Don't be scared. It's not likely to cause serious trouble.'

The new 'flu has killed thousands since it started in Hong Kong a month ago."

Daily Sketch

Usual clash of opinion.



Nil Nisi Malum

ALWAYS plenty of good cheer for those not afraid to look for it, and news that a man named Ruben is just starting to make a net profit of rather more than eleven million dollars by shovelling bat manure out of caves at the bottom of the Grand Canyon came this week as a tonic to many. It proves, as an official of the Bank of England put it, that if you hang about long enough and keep your head, anything can happen. It was a forthright statement of the kind we expect to hear from our financial leaders, and we may be sure it did not pass unnoticed by foreign speculators.

The attempt to discount the significance of Ruben's bonanza by pointing out that he seems to be some sort of Canadian is specious, and designed simply to shake public confidence in the possibilities of everything. To say, as a Labour politician has ventured to do, that "we in England have neither enough caves nor enough bats to meet the requirements of our economic situation" is to miss the point. The point is that if the caves and bats are not there, something else must be. It is a fact which both the Chancellor and the Shadow Chancellor are certainly keeping in mind and one which goes far to put the Bank Rate in proper perspective. On this vexed subject of the Bank Rate it is unnecessary to say more except to point out that it very finely illustrates a central fact about economics and finance which is that the more

splendid and statesmanlike any given financial measure is, the sooner it is reversed the better for all concerned.

However, as someone or other of great authority has emphasized, the weakness in our position, and also in a sense its strength, is that too many people seem to suppose that the job of Public Relations Officers, official spokesmen and such is to make something or somebody look good. The conception is laborious and old-fashioned. Its underlying fallacy has been ably exposed by Porringer. "Right at the outset," he remarks in his inaugural address, "you are up against the fact, which certain backward statesmen and national leaders still seek to deny, that 40 per cent of people have faces which do not inspire public confidence, and a steady look at the other 60 per cent is all too apt to cause the average observer to dump all his holdings on the market for whatever they will fetch and study a book on edible fungoids so as to be self-supporting when it happens."

"For every member of the public who, on hearing that the man in charge of the national debt or the traffic problem or whatever it may be once won the Newdigate prize and is an expert at ju-jutsu and kind to cats, sits back puffing with relief and broods on new ways to increase output, there are ten who start muttering about whitened sepulchres and do not rest until they have nosed out something disquieting

in relation to the man's fitness for his position, such as that he once signed something in favour of something unsound, or that Pandit Nehru is known to dislike him."

Porringer, whose new method of approach is likely to be increasingly adopted, urges that the whole pathetic attempt to make anyone or anything popular on his or its supposed "merits" should be jettisoned as at best a waste of time and at worst worse than that.

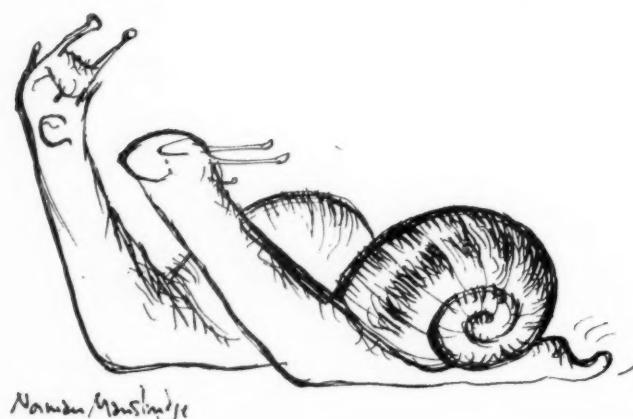
Badge, a keen Porringer disciple, when asked on what grounds he supported the economic policy of his party, replied "Ever hear of Sir Robert Peel? Know what he said when he introduced the Bank Act in 1844? He said—excuse my laughing—that as a result of that Act there would never be an economic crisis in England again. How's that for crassness? How dumb can you get? Or do I have to give you a list of the crises that followed, year after year, decade after decade, till the Bank Act was as full of holes as Peel's argument?"

"Lash out at the past is my motto. You can't libel it and it can't hit back. Do the job properly, and before you know where you are, everyone's so grateful not to be up against all those dead and gone muddlers they'll lap up anything you offer them and like it."

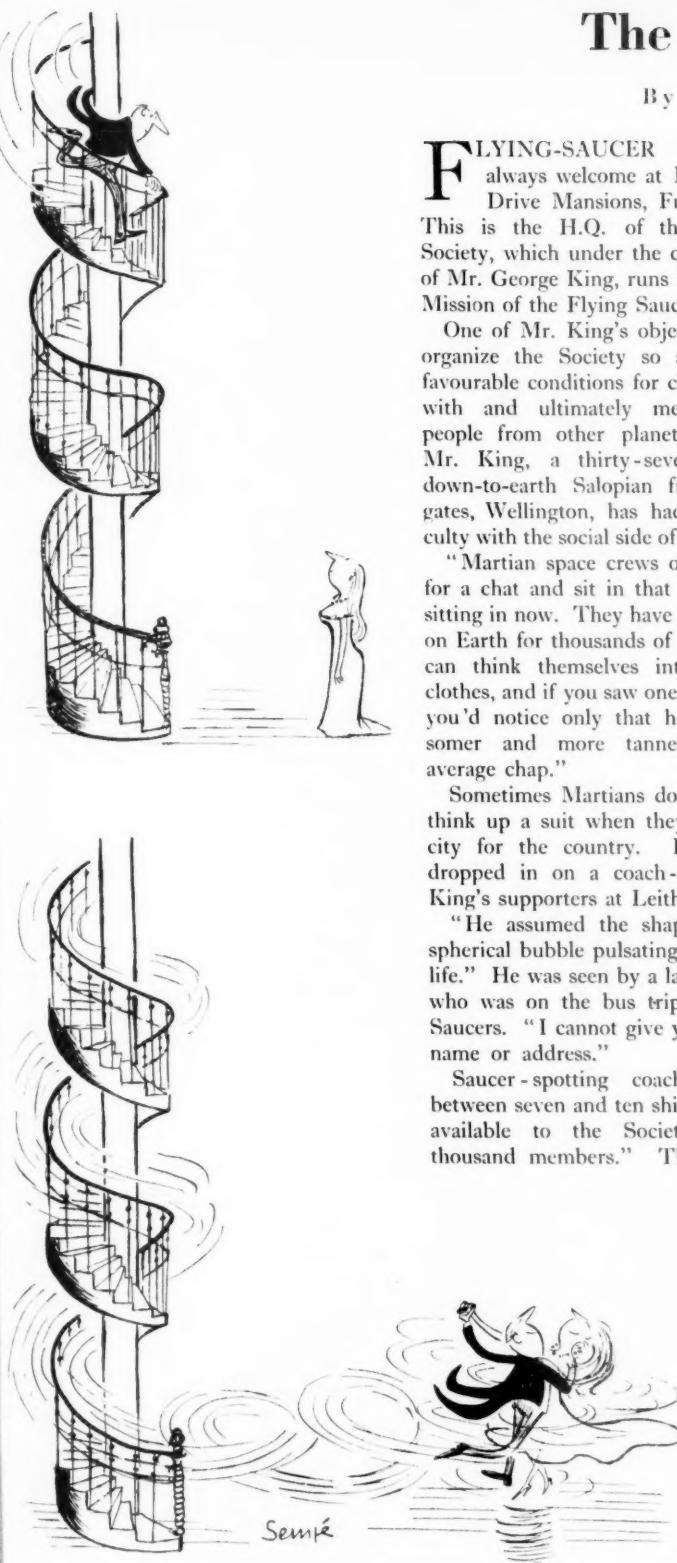
Porringer, it is understood, is at this moment working on a *Dictionary of Disasters* for use by public speakers. He hopes eventually to cover the whole field of economics, politics and war. His list of dead generals who in the course of the last few hundred years brought humiliation on themselves and defeat upon the armed forces of Britain is expected to send surging through the country a wave of enthusiasm for the Ministry of Defence. A similar roster of deceased prelates noted for ignorance, corruption, simony, licentiousness and/or cynically heretical opinions is calculated to bring about a new thankfulness in the national heart over the fact that our modern clergy are exactly as they are.

"The purpose of the whole work," Porringer says, summing it up, "is not just to assert that things might be worse—some people won't believe that. It's to prove that they not only might be but have been."

By CLAUD COCKBURN



"What's the idea—accelerating when I'm overtaking?"



The Spiritual Push

By ROBERT HANCOCK

FLYING-SAUCCER crews are always welcome at Flat 88, The Drive Mansions, Fulham, S.W. This is the H.Q. of the Aetherius Society, which under the chairmanship of Mr. George King, runs the Spiritual Mission of the Flying Saucers.

One of Mr. King's objectives is "to organize the Society so as to create favourable conditions for closer contact with and ultimately meetings with people from other planets." So far Mr. King, a thirty-seven-year-old, down-to-earth Salopian from Oaken-gates, Wellington, has had little difficulty with the social side of the Mission.

"Martian space crews often drop in for a chat and sit in that chair you're sitting in now. They have been landing on Earth for thousands of years. They can think themselves into a suit of clothes, and if you saw one in Piccadilly you'd notice only that he was handsomer and more tanned than the average chap."

Sometimes Martians don't bother to think up a suit when they forsake the city for the country. Recently one dropped in on a coach-load of Mr. King's supporters at Leith Hill.

"He assumed the shape of a blue spherical bubble pulsating with vibrant life." He was seen by a lady Aetherian who was on the bus trip to spot the Saucers. "I cannot give you the lady's name or address."

Saucer-spotting coach trips cost between seven and ten shillings and are available to the Society's "several thousand members." The Society is

named after Aetherius, the main Venusian communicator with Earth. There are supporters in the U.S.A. and most of Europe and there is no subscription, members giving what they can afford to this non-profit-making organization. Mr. King also has a part-time job with a watch company, "one of whose directors is favourably disposed to us."

There are thirteen meetings of the Society a year at the Caxton Hall, admission 2/6, open to all, when Mr. King goes into a trance and speaks with Space and St. Peter, "wholiveson Mars." The authorities do not regard this as entertaining and no tax is paid.

Should Mr. King be sick, a tape-recorded message is played from him to the faithful. The Society has recently bought two £100 recorders. Mr. King recalls the day two and a half years ago when a white-robed gentleman walked through the closed door of his bachelor flat in Maida Vale where he was washing up. He was told: "Prepare to become the voice of Interplanetary Parliament." He immediately recognized his visitor: "I cannot reveal his name but he came from Thebut in the Himalayas." Once briefed, Mr. King was soon on splendid trance terms with Aetherius on Venus, "a young chap, 2,500 years old." He learned: "We are using between 20,000 and 30,000 mother ships and between 180,000 and 280,000 remote-controlled vessels in an effort to pour into your Earth a great flood of magnetic energy."

Mr. King was sorry but "Aetherius has forbidden me to tell you about the construction or propulsion units of these ships." Aetherius did explain why all these Saucers were screaming over Earth. It seems that the H-bomb experiments are threatening the whole cosmic balance. Another friend, a voice called Mars Sector 6, on Satellite 3, told Terra "You are approaching your eleventh hour."

The Society sent this warning to all M.P.s, cost £60 by registered post, and got replies from three, one of whom was Mr. Macmillan who dryly reminded Mr. King of H.M.G.'s declared atomic policy.

Mr. King is a regular commuter to

Mars, Venus and the Moon. "I go into a trance and leave my earthly envelope. There is no language difficulty. All space tongues are transmitted on a magnetic carrier beam that automatically translates them into English." Venus, Mr. King reports, has circular cities, only explorers from other planets camp on the Moon, and "Earth scientists will be furious to learn that there is oxygen on Mars."

This is produced by vast belts of vegetation and flowers, the latter being the size of a seven-storey Earth building. Martians are vegetarians and their land is 18,600,849 years old "according to the Brahmin tables." It is spotless, with all the street and domestic cleaning

done by rays. Reproduction is by thought process and, not surprisingly in this feminist paradise, there are no pubs.

Mr. King has brought back no Hoover-challenging souvenirs from Mars, but trip details are recorded in the Society's 2/6 magazine *Cosmic Voice*. The Society's Treasurer and Secretary, Miss Grace Abercrombie, a slightly anxious middle-aged lady, writes in it. She specializes in articles on "The Spiritual Push."

When Mr. King is not Saucer-spotting in the Fulham sky ("they look like golden balls") he goes to the movies. "I enjoy a musical and pretty girls, but I love a space film. You know, it's surprising how accurate they are."



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Somebody Loves You

LAST Wednesday morning was romantically blue and sunny in Sussex. I was leaving my house when I saw something white in the second lavender bush on the left—a letter, addressed in clear if childish writing to my wife, and marked "By Hand" in one corner.

In a marriage of trust, correspondence is interchangeable, and in any case the addressee was in the bath.

"I wonder," began the letter, in a rounded script suggesting generosity, dependability and conscientiousness—"I wonder if you have had the opportunity to try Surf recently, it's getting more popular than ever, you know. Besides getting out those annoying stains like tea, gravy, and so on . . ." And so on. From Yours Sincerely, Jean Robinson, 3 Bridewell Place, E.C.4.

The pity is, I feel, that the best gimmick in this splendid new development in Direct Mail techniques was purely fortuitous. The "By Hand" idea was good, certainly, even though it must place an extra strain on the local grocer's delivery resources. But the tucking in a lavender bush, the stroke of genius, was individual to the house my wife is the lady of, which has its letter-box at the back, thus baffling strangers taking messages to the front.

But most of the best discoveries are accidental, and I pass this one on to detergent manufacturers everywhere. Why should not future correspondence be, as a matter of course, tucked in bushes or lodged in the crook of the old oak tree? A mystery phone call, husky, saying, "Look under the old beehive" or in the dustbin, or wherever it is, could begin a delightful treasure hunt, ending in a note from Miss Robinson, and coupons ensuring a Family Size packet for only 1s. 7d.

Actually, I am not sure about Miss Robinson. If the thing is going to get as romantic as this, isn't it time that a touch of love interest was sprinkled in? Why not try a savage, masculine handwriting next time, on faintly tobacco-scented paper. "Yours sincerely, Jack Robinson," would do. Housewives would be out of their baths and following the trail before you could say it.

J. B. B.



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A STAFF OFFICER'S SAGA

II. *To the Front and Back*



LEARNT a great deal about the practical side of soldiering during my time as A.D.C. to the G.O.C. Central African District; I learnt to speak of senior officers by their Christian names and to address them as "colonel" or "general" rather than "sir"; I learnt the importance of having a good team working together and how easy it was to get officers posted to, or from, one's headquarters by a word in the right place; I learnt, above all, the basic solidarity that exists between officers who have served together or even simply been to school together. But the day came when General Surplice, or General Charles as I now knew him, was moved to another appointment (he got a District in Ceylon), and he felt that there was no future in my accompanying him there. Before he went, however, he arranged for me to go on a staff course. "We can't get you on the proper course," he apologized, "only the baby course at Sarafand. But you really learn just as much in wartime; the only difference is that you get *j.s.c.* after your name in the Army List instead of *p.s.c.*"

I found the course at the Junior Staff College pretty straightforward. There was no riding, of course, but I played a good deal of squash with the D.S., and always lost. Towards the end of the course the Deputy Military Secretary from G.H.Q. at Cairo came to give a talk on the functions of his department, and he turned out to be a contemporary of my father's at Wellington. In conversation with him after his lecture I mentioned that I was not especially keen on going back to Central Africa, and he said he would see what he could do. I remembered that conversation with gratitude at the end of the course when I found myself posted as G3 (Operations) to H.Q. 15 Corps in Italy.

After a few days' leave in Cairo I set off for Italy. I found my new masters at Sporchedda on the Adriatic coast. It

was after dark when I arrived, and I was dog-tired; but as I made my way through the dark streets of this little Italian village I must confess that I felt an involuntary sensation of excitement at having arrived at "the front." Far away on the northern skyline little flashes like summer lightning showed where the guns were firing. I could not dispel a moment's pride in the thought that I was going to play my part in directing this great campaign.

I soon got into the Ops Room routine, which consisted mostly of taking and passing messages, marking situation maps and allotting vacancies on courses. I did not greatly care for my colleagues, however; they did not really seem dedicated to staff work but would seize every opportunity to pile into a jeep and visit what they called "the sharp end." Both the G2s, though, and the other G3 were always glad to turn over any of their work to me, so we managed to get along.

There was a lull on the Corps front at the time, but a "set-piece" battle was being planned. One afternoon, just as some of us were going off to the Mess for tea, a telephone message came to say that the Army Group Commander was to visit our front next morning and wanted a guide to take him to the village of Rovinato, which lay in 19 Division's sector. Sheridan, the other G3, would normally have gone, as he had himself served in the 19 Div., but it happened that he had been slightly hurt in the foot when his jeep ran over a mine that morning, so I volunteered to take his place. Wycherley, the duty G2, seemed surprised. "You haven't been up there yet, have you?" he asked.

"It's just a question of following a map, surely," I said.

I have never understood why the Army

makes such a fuss about map-reading. Any child who can read the alphabet should be able to read a map; and in this case anyway there were so few roads that the chances of losing the way were negligible. I telephoned the Transport Officer to have my jeep ready in the morning.

I arrived at the rendezvous with five minutes to spare and, punctual to the minute, the Army Group Commander turned up with his retinue. I was surprised to see that not only was General Alexander there, in a jeep with his Chief of Staff, but the Army Commander with his chief of Staff and, in a third jeep, another general whom I did not recognize. They were preceded by a Military Police officer in a fourth jeep and made, as I said to this last individual, a very easy target for a strafing enemy fighter if one should come along.

"You just go ahead," he told me. "I'll see after these boys."

There was little traffic on the road, but I told my driver to keep his speed moderate. The route lay along a lateral road for a couple of miles, and I picked out with satisfaction various landmarks I had noted on my map. When we reached the junction where I reckoned we should turn right I was slightly perturbed to see no signpost pointing to

Larry.





"He always likes to appear somewhere in his pictures."

19 Division, or indeed to any other unit or formation. However, my map confirmed that this was the road to Rovinato, so up we went.

The road was narrow and rather rough, and there was really only room for one stream of traffic; and to make matters worse my driver told me that the verges had not yet been completely cleared of mines. It was therefore with some alarm that I saw approaching a long convoy of seven-ton trucks.

"Going to be fireworks now, sir," my driver commented.

I said there was no need for fireworks. "They will simply have to pull in and let us pass. We've as much right of way as they have, and I imagine General Alexander is more important than an empty ration convoy."

"Do we still have the right of way then?" my driver asked. "I thought

it was different when you're going against a one-way route."

"Do you mean to say," I said, appalled, "that this is a one-way route?"

"Cor, sir," said the driver, "didn't you know?"

An officer was sitting in the leading seven-tonner, and as soon as we had pulled up I called to him. "You'll have to take your convoy into the side. I have the Army Group Commander and the Army Commander behind, and they want to get to Rovinato in a hurry."

"Then why the hell do they come up the down route?" the officer asked. However, he gave his driver the necessary instructions and began to walk back along the convoy.

The driver was clearly an exceptionally incompetent fellow, for he was so clumsy in moving his vehicle that his nearside front wheel almost immediately

sank up to the axle in the soft earth of the verge. He then tried, too hurriedly, to back out again, with the result that his truck swung round until it was almost broadside-on, with the front wheels on one verge and the rear wheels on the other, and all four down to the axles.

The Provost officer now came up to ask what had happened. When he saw the position of the seven-tonner he gave a whistle of dismay. "Why on earth didn't you send out a signal to say you were coming against the circuit?" he asked me. "Then you'd have kept these boys off." I explained that, owing to an inexcusable piece of carelessness I had not been told that the route was one-way. "General Dick isn't going to be very happy," he said, and walked back towards the Army Commander. There was a short, animated conversation and he beckoned me to join them.

The Army Commander addressed me in a quiet, gentle voice. "What is your name?" he asked. I told him. "And what do you do at 15 Corps?" I told him. "Very well, Parsons," he said. "I shall make it my personal responsibility to see that you are never again given a chance to endanger the conduct of operations in my Army. Will you give your commander my compliments and tell him that."

"Very good, sir," I said, saluting stiffly.

As it happened, the Corps Commander was out on a reconnaissance when I got back. By the time I was able to see him the Army Commander had already been on the telephone.

B. A. YOUNG

§ §

"WANTED: HEAD FOR PHANTOM POLICE"
Daily Express

Must fit under long arm of law?

NEXT WEEK'S PUNCH

will contain the
first instalment of

"I LIKE IT HERE,"
a new novel by
KINGSLEY AMIS,
author of "**Lucky Jim.**"

Lorelei

By ANTHONY CARSON

GO to St. Goarhausen," said the lady in the travel bureau, pointing at a map of the Rhine. "It is near Lorelei." There was a picture of a girl combing her golden hair, and a cat looking out of a castle at a mouse looking out of a castle. "What are these animals doing?" I asked the lady. "Those are Castle Cat and Castle Mouse. It is beautiful there and you can go and see the Lorelei."

I bought a ticket and took a train to Cologne and another train to St. Goarhausen. I sat down at a neat tea-house tavern and watched the Rhine roll by, swift as a snake, with the tugs inching up-stream with a black frown of smoke. Up-stream I could see the Lorelei rock and Cat castle. Down-stream was Mouse castle and a tiny village gleaming like lumps of sugar. I drank red Rhine wine, and I didn't know quite why, but I felt sad. Perhaps everything looked too grand and opulent. The Rhine ran too quickly. Around me people were eating huge cream cakes, studying their illustrated maps and adjusting their cameras. Under the neat trees were fifteen motor coaches.

I asked for accommodation and was eventually directed to the village, to the house of a lady called Braun. The village was about two miles away and it was quite a stiff walk, carrying a suitcase. I liked the air of the place, it smelt of old wood, new bread and the damp, ancient smell of the river. Few places, anywhere, have any stirring smells, chemicals are eating away at the world's roots. I found Frau Braun; she was a large palish woman and I could see I frightened her. She passed me on to two other villagers, and they seemed frightened too. Finally I met a family who welcomed me into their house with smiles; they might have been waiting for me. They showed me a room upstairs, clean as a new button, and prepared me an enormous meal. "Don't worry about those other people in the village," said my hostess. "They simply think you're a spy. It doesn't worry me at all." "But I'm not a spy," I said. "Everyone has to do something," said my landlady. "That's right," said her husband, who was a master bricklayer.

"Each to his trade." "But I am not a spy," I repeated. "Do you have many spies here?" "Many visit St. Goarhausen. They are from the East Zone," said my landlady. "To-morrow," said her husband, changing the conversation, "you must visit Castle Cat and Castle Mouse. Or the Rheinfels Ruins at St. Goar." "I will," I said. "And Lorelei," said his wife. "You must not miss Lorelei. It is beautiful at Lorelei."

The next morning I got up early, and the old timber, the river and the new-baked bread smelt as sweet as wild flowers. I walked up to Castle Mouse

and looked down at the old silver river with the tugs inching up. Then I walked down and into the town. I sat down in a smart terrace, ordered some wine and took out my pen and exercise book. A few minutes passed by and a huge head-waiter approached me, looking at me sideways. "You are staying in the hotel?" he asked me. "No," I said. "I am drinking wine and writing." "Ah," said the head-waiter, still sideways. "I am writing stories," I said. "Ah," said the head-waiter, "you are doubtless an Englishman. I know a Mr. Smith. He comes here." "You are surprised to find people writing in your terrace?" I said. "Many write in the terrace," said the head-waiter, "for different reasons, no doubt." "I am not a spy," I cried. "God forbid," replied





"Is what 'contagious'?"

the head-waiter, "but each to his trade."

I got up and decided to walk to Lorelei. I had often, since long back, thought of the Lorelei. All travellers have her at the back of their minds. Sometimes she is a mountain, sometimes an island, sometimes a woman. Or she is all three.

I walked up the road past the guest-houses and found a very small hill-path, which clambered up past vineyards and rocks and precipices towards the cliff at the top. It was very wild, and one kept on seeing the strong silver Rhine and there was a smell of resin. Then I reached the top. I was surprised to find a sort of open-air theatre and a notice-board saying LORELEI FESTIVAL THEATRE. A little farther on was a large brown modernistic building with a huge name plate: LORELEI YOUTH AND RECREATION CENTRE. Then I saw a signpost with the words LORELEI RESTAURANT AND GIFT SHOPS. I followed the signpost and walked through a wood into a vast restaurant with a terrace and parasols and waiters in white coats with gold braid. Nearby were the gift shops, nothing like Cornish gift shops, nothing vulgar, very tasteful, very expensive. Castle Cat

scarves, Castle Mouse caps, a girl combing her golden hair on a parasol with a silver handle. I sat down at a table and ordered a liver sandwich. Everyone looked enormously opulent, static and uninquiring.

There was nothing to do but to take out my exercise book and start writing. I had written a sentence, crossed it out, and was drawing faces on the opposite page when I became aware of somebody sitting opposite me at the table. He was a large, nearly middle-aged man in a blue jersey and shorts. He had a tattoo mark on his right arm. He was staring at me. "Writing, eh?" he said. "That's so," I said. "I have to do it for a living. I'm not a spy." "I never said that," said the man in the jersey. "What do you write about?" "Anything," I said. "Things are always happening, or at least nearly." "I could give you something to write about," said the man in the jersey. "Who are you?" I asked. "I'm one of the rescue men," he said. "I fish people out of the river. Quite a few people jump off the cliff. Mostly in autumn." "Why?" I asked. "Ask me another one. It's an odd sort of place this. Makes a mint of money, but it gets creepy in the evening. Doesn't worry me, though. I don't believe in

fairy stories." I offered him a cigarette. "Funny thing," he continued, "there was a lady who used to write a lot here. Quite a beauty. Long golden hair. She was always combing it like the girl in the poem. But she was no ghost. I fished a lot of D.P.s from the Eastern Zone at the time I'm telling you. Dead as dogs. It turned out she was a spy from East Berlin."

"That's a good story," I said. "Will you have a drink?" "I'll have one," he said, "and then I've got to get to my look-out post." After the drink I walked back down the path on to the road. It was rather cold, and you could hear the river churning. I arrived at the village and went into the house.

"A lady called to see you about half an hour ago," said my landlady. "What lady?" I asked. "She had long golden hair," said her husband. "Look, she left her comb behind." I stood there perplexed, amazed, with a shiver in the corner of my heart.

Then they both burst out laughing. "It's a joke," said Frau Schmidt, tears in her eyes from laughing. "Here in the Rhineland we are always making jokes."



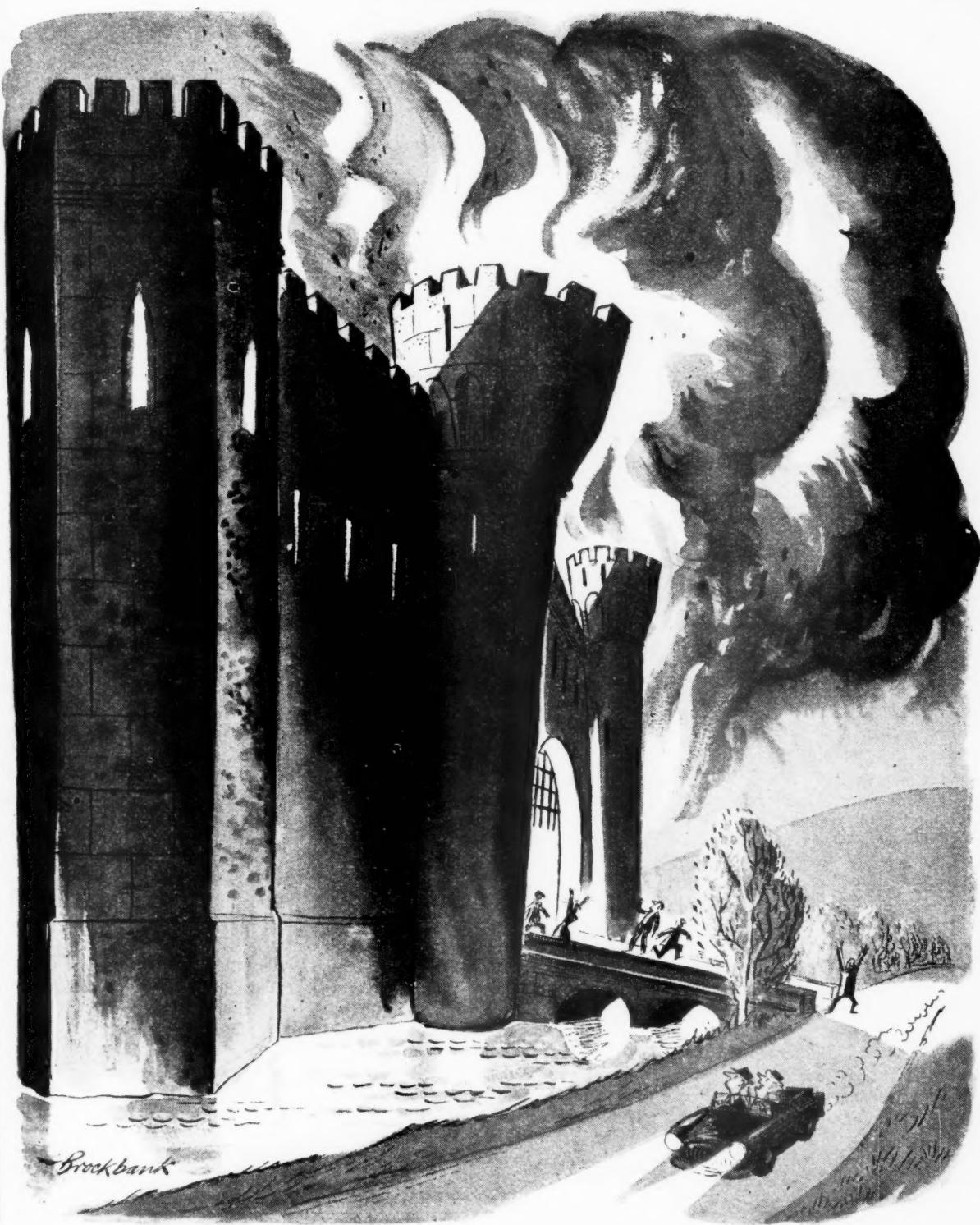
Farewell

(FOR MUSIC)

DON'T write, my dear,
Though we be far and fond:
It's threepence now—
Sixpence if I respond.
O save your pence
And your sore heart conceal,
For I shall sense
Exactly how you feel.

Don't write, my dear—
One ounce will cost three d.,
And, when in form,
You run to two or three.
Though we delight
To keep in tender touch,
Sixpence a night
Would be a bit too much.

Don't write, my dear.
I love you, as you know,
But can't afford
To keep on saying so.
You are my Fate,
And, if this isn't plain,
You'll have to wait
Until we meet again. A. P. H.



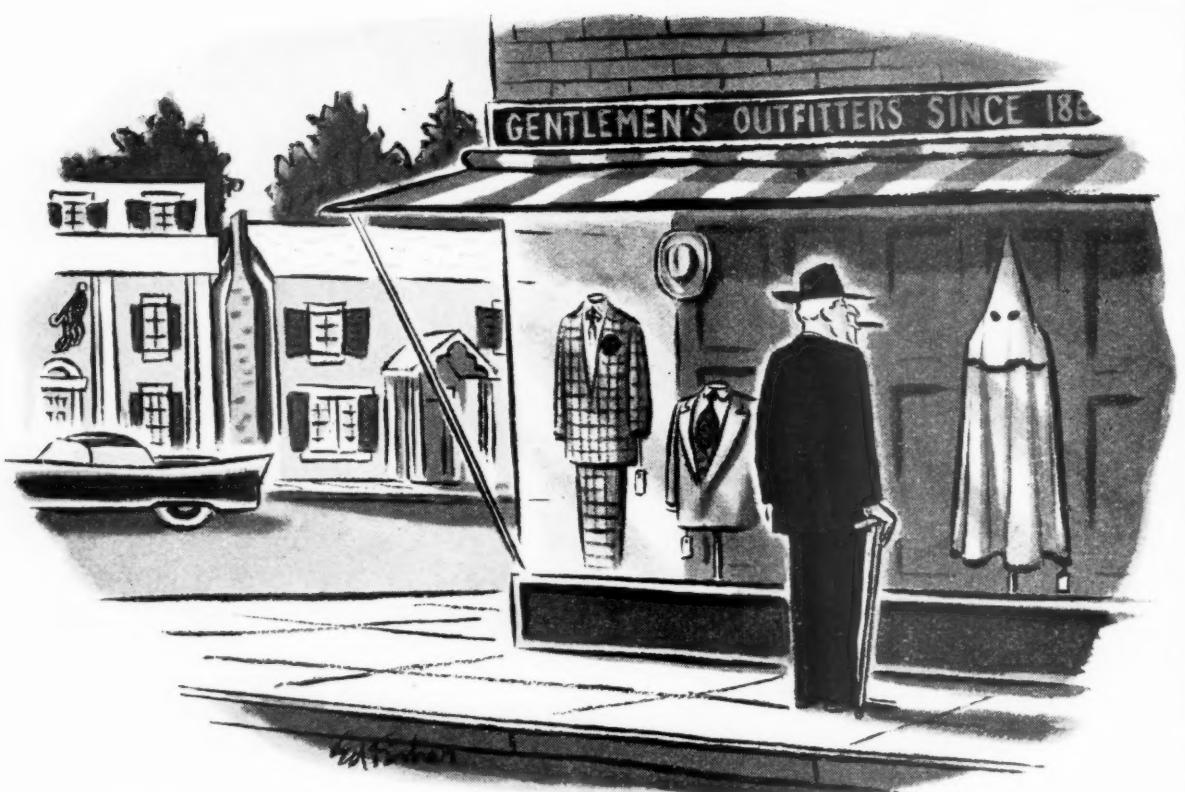
"I thought you told me 'Son et Lumière' was finished."

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Chimpism

By ANTHONY POWELL

THE paintings executed by apes now on view at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Dover Street open up all kinds of interesting possibilities. Let one thing be made clear from the start: both exhibitors possess a very decided and quite different talent. There is not the slightest question here of the classic "modern art" rag of the donkey's tail in the pail of paint. This is what used to be called "significant form." Everyone who takes an interest in painting should go and see these pictures.

Both artists are of Chimpanzee origin, Betsy, domiciled at the Zoo in Baltimore; Congo, an immigrant from Africa to this country, now living in Regent's Park. The pioneer of simian graphic art, appropriately named Alpha, was also an American ape by adoption. By 1951, when she was eighteen years of age, she had produced several hundred drawings, and an analytical study of her *œuvre* was published in the *Journal of Comparative and Physiological Psychology*.

To Betsy and Congo Alpha is merely an interesting primitive, but collectors may be well advised to look to the future (for when her work comes up at auction it could become of considerable value) rather than be led away by the attraction of this contemporary school, about whose technique a word should be said.

Betsy (b. 1950) paints with her finger from pigment supplied in blobs upon a flat surface. She has founded in Baltimore a school of young Southern Chimpanzee finger-painters. Congo (b. 1955) uses a different and more academic method. Brushes loaded with paint by his assistants are handed to him, and he paints in red, green, yellow, blue, black or white until tired of the colour in which he is working. A brush dipped in another colour is then proffered.

"After a while," writes Mr. Desmond Morris in his Introduction to the catalogue of this exhibition, "he [the artist] begins to lose interest in the

picture as a whole and it is then taken away." It is impossible not to feel that the walls of Burlington House, or even those of some Bond Street dealers, might be more agreeable if there were someone to carry out this same process with painters (*homo sapiens*) when obviously bored with their pictures.

Betsy's style, so it seems to me, is the more sophisticated of the two painters now before us, although for myself I prefer the deeper sincerity of Congo's handling of paint. Congo has *Tachiste* tendencies, probably also influenced when a student by Léger and Gleizes, though one should not exaggerate his adhesion to Cubist principles. He is full of deep feeling. Betsy, on the other hand, although the delicacy of her tubular designs is typically feminine in its subtlety (and probably retains ideas from Braque's early, light-toned period), does not always rise above a fashionable frivolity that at times recalls Dali's backgrounds.

It is said that Congo is now returning

to simple black-and-white drawing. Perhaps, like Picasso, he will in due course move on to ceramics. In spite of his delight in the striking arrangement of colour, he is basically interested in pattern and form. This is especially shown in the pictures that have been allowed to dry, and upon which he has worked on subsequent occasions.

One can imagine a Van Meegeren of the future elaborately faking the pictures of the twentieth-century Simian School. Meanwhile, although, like true artists, never rewarded for their work (they are not given even a banana), these two make fairly frequent appearances on television. It is to be hoped that such wide popularity and inevitable emphasis on the means rather than the end will not undermine their admirably aesthetic integrity.



"This is Charlie Jones, dear—you've heard me speak of old Charlie."

Rhyme Scheme Crossword

All quotations contain a word which rhymes with the word required

ACROSS

1. Clear in the cool September morn. (8)
5. I called him Brother, Englishman, and Friend! (6)
10. Behind him march the halberdiers; before him sound the drums. (5)
11. There is a good brew in Amberley too. (9)
12. Ah God! to see the branches stir. (10)
13. The Pobble swam fast and well. (4)
15. Come unto these yellow sands. (7)
17. The snail's on the thorn. (7)
19. A greenery-yallery, Grosvenor Gallery, foot-in-the-grave young man. (7)

21. Betrothed, betrayer and betrayed! (7)

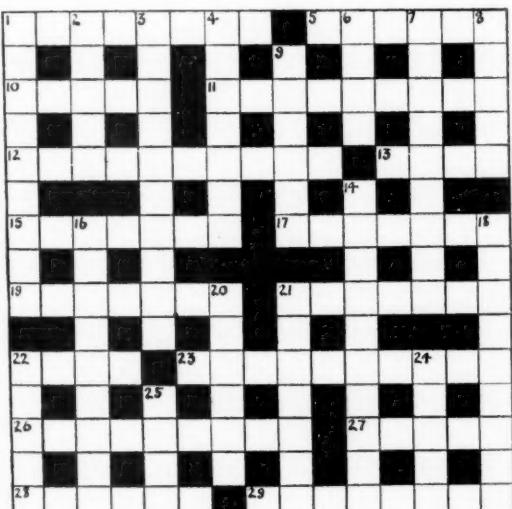
22. Birds in their little nests agree. (4)
23. Timon hath made his everlasting mansion. (5, 5)
26. Though trunkless, yet
It couldn't forget
The deference due to me! (9)
27. Wretch even then, life's journey just begun. (5)
28. That callow, virgin-minded, studious Martyr to mild enthusiasm. (6)
29. The coarser pleasures of my boyish days. (8)

DOWN

1. Attend, all ye who list to hear our noble England's praise. (9)
2. I'll set a bourn how far to be beloved. (5)
3. The fairies break their dances. (10)
4. Sweet are the uses of adversity. (7)
6. In foemen worthy of their steel. (4)
7. Diaphenia, like the daffadowndilly. (9)
8. Loyal and neutral, in a moment? (5)
9. Unmatched for courage, breath, and speed. (6)
14. Let us be Diana's foresters, gentlemen of the shade, minions of the moon. (10)
16. So careful of the type she seems. (9)
18. Inspiring John Barleycorn!
What dangers thou canst make us scorn. (9)
20. He earns whate'er he can. (6)
21. Whose head proud fancy never taught to steer
Beyond the muddy ecstasies of beer. (7)
22. Where there aren't no Ten Commandments, an' a man can raise a thirst. (5)
24. The Liner she's a lady, an' she never looks nor 'eeds. (5)
25. With a cargo of Tyne coal. (4)

SECOND ROUND (Optional)

The sources, if you care to fit them, are Shakespeare (6), Scott (3), Wordsworth (2), Macaulay (2), Browning (2), Gilbert (2), Kipling (2), Whittier, Belloc, Brooke, Watts, Cowper, Housman, Constable, Burns, Tennyson, Longfellow, Crabbe, Masefield, Lear.



Solution next week.



PRIVATE VIEW

3—Picture Sunday with Peter Paul Rubens.



In the City

Mr. Eight and a Half per Cent Overdraft

BACK in 1933, in a period of depression, nine Oxford economists sat down to thrash out *What Everybody Wants to Know About Money*. The brains trust of young pedagogues included many names that have since become pretty well known — Colin Clark, R. F. Harrod, Aylmer Vallance, G. D. H. Cole, E. F. M. Durbin, H. T. N. Gaitskell . . . And in the light of recent events and possible forthcoming attractions it is interesting to see what the stars had to foretell.

On manipulations of Bank Rate they were explicit. A rise in interest rates, Roy Harrod explained, will cause the rate of addition to real capital to slow down—"unemployment will occur at first in the constructional trades and then be more widely diffused. The income and purchasing power of the whole community will be restricted and purchases of foreign goods and services will be cut down . . . The foreign balance of payments is restored, because imports and foreign investments, which both appear as debits in the foreign balance, are cut down. The prices of home-made goods tend to fall; the output of them is reduced. The severer the deflation, the more widespread is the unemployment and the greater the reduction of income." This is the classical theory, a theory evolved in a capitalist, predominantly industrial, country that was convinced of the virtues of *laissez-faire* and of the magical properties of monetary mechanics.

Will it work in 1957? Will "work in the constructional trades," producers' goods, suffer heavily when the majority of our industrial units are self-financing and when businesses are so vast that their survival and efficiency are matters of national importance? Can investment overseas be cut down significantly when there is so little of it? Is a reduction in the price of home-made goods likely when the unions insist on annual or half-yearly additions to their pound of

flesh? Can inflation be halted by rule-of-thumb financial legerdemain when it has become chronic and creeping and the main weapon in the wage-earners' revolution? I have my doubts, and the history of chronic inflationary spirals in other countries—in Germany, Russia and Greece, makes dubiety far more realistic than the rugged optimism of most of our financial pundits.

The wisest words on the crisis have come from the *Financial Times*. "Unless," it says, "from now on there is a quite different attitude to wage claims it will be no good to impose restrictive monetary measures from the Treasury. The restrictions are merely being sent to the wrong address." Without an effective stop on wage demands higher interest rates are bound to lead to further inflation. For if the purchasing power is available industry will continue to tap it. Prices will be adjusted to cover the new financial burdens, and margins of profit will be

stepped up in anticipation of heavier labour costs. And with the result that money will spin at greater speed.

In the long run—not so long under modern methods of production—the pressure on ordinary consumers' goods will be met by transferring *some* of our resources from capital construction to the retail end of the belt conveyor. And industrial development along these lines would make economic recovery all the more difficult.

If the financial mechanism has failed what can replace it? We don't know. In a free economy—ours is still four-fifths free—purposive central planning works only when it is the unrivalled arbiter of economic ways and means. When it tries to share the wheel with militant organized labour disaster is always round the next corner. At Blackpool the unions made a great show of their distrust of Communism. But by their actions they are driving the country smack into it. **MAMMON**

* * *



In the Country

I Peep Over the Wall

I OFTEN wonder why I cling to this sodden ditch which is Devonshire. It cannot be because of the climate: as temperamental as a woman; all gales, tears and squalls to no purpose, only variety to commend it. It cannot be because of the comfort: a draughty house, damp seeping into my linen, rusting my marrow. Our fires smoke, our lamps smeech, high rates and no public services. True, the land is fertile, but so is Ontario. Here, one farms for exercise. Friends of mine, who have pulled up their roots and planted themselves in more element places abroad, try to persuade me to follow. But even when they point out what I would save in taxation alone I am only tempted. Nothing will budge me. And I believe I now know why.

I don't think I could manage to do without the antics and capers of my ridiculous neighbours. Any English

village is a collection of eccentrics, and I could not be weaned from them. They may laugh at me; I collapse at the mere thought of some of them.

There's the Honourable Mrs. Westwood; she's forgotten where she has put Mr. Westwood. "I have a feeling I left him in Cairo and forgot to tell him where I was going." She dines with me occasionally, usually the week after the date she was invited. Recently, at the table she suddenly announced that her diamond clasp was gone. We exhausted ourselves in a fruitless search. "Don't worry, I dare say it's fallen down my bosom," she said, fumbling into her dress. "Yes, here it is," she cried, producing a tulip bulb. We stared. She was not dismayed. "I see what I've done. I was planting out a bed this afternoon. Must have planted my clasp instead of the bulb."

But it doesn't end there. Our neighbour has filled his greenhouse with packets of tea "to spite Bulganin." Another has had mains electricity connected but has only one bulb in his house, which he carries from room to room because "he doesn't see why he should support nationalized industries."

And all of us collect: the Vicar's wife collects pieces of string, since you never know when it might be useful; the Vicar collects matchboxes which he covers in velvet . . . My only eccentricity is I collect my neighbours.

RONALD DUNCAN

CRITICISM



BOOKING OFFICE

Conversational Camouflage

ONE of the essentials of polite education is learning how to breast a conversation about a book you have not read. Sometimes it is best to boast that you have never read it and do not intend to. Faced with a party of people all of whom seem to be soaked in Warton's *History of English Poetry*, do not say you don't get much time for reading these days and giggle. Throw your head back, stare them down and say "I can never forgive Warton's treatment of Shenstone." Nothing makes a man seem better read than having the ashes of dead controversies still warm in him. It is true that someone may look up the details later, but either he will turn up a real case of mis-treating poor Shenstone, a bit of luck for you, or he will fail but feel that perhaps he has not tried the right authorities.

You should always follow up with a reference to an obscure book that you have read. Indeed, it is well worth reading one before venturing into the great world. (The system of Special Subjects at Universities often ensures your having done so. I once read, or rather passed an examination in, Arnold fitz Thedmar's *Liber de Antiquis Legibus*. It has often infuriated me that I can remember nothing about it except that the cover came off much too easily.) The ideal book is not one that is so *outré* that a reference to it produces silence. It should be a book that could, in fact, have been read by anyone in the room but is unlikely to have been read by them all. You toss the name in as your contribution to the literary talk and do not worry too much if the subject is taken up by a talker who knows more about it than you do. Once the conversation has swung round to it you can look bored.

With very famous books your ignorance can be made to look like a consistent pose. You buttress your denial of ever having opened *David Copperfield* by also denying all acquaintance with *Hamlet*, *Lycidas* and *The*

Vicar of Wakefield. You explain, sneeringly, that for you the list of English Classics is rather different from the Hundred Best Books. A man whose favourite poet is Hoccleve obviously belongs to a different tradition from the ordinary reader. It does not matter that your views are absurd; it never does in conversation. What matters is that they are the result of deliberation and have led to hardship. There is always something a little daunting



about a man who has renounced pleasure and sought pain simply on grounds of principle, and to be daunting leads to much more rapid social success than being charming. Charming people can be left out.

It is much more difficult to deal with the classic that is not quite taken for granted but casts a shadow over a man's pretensions by its absence. The claim to prefer Hoccleve to Milton is so impossible as to be credible. The claim to prefer Hoccleve to Dr. Johnson might simply show that you were stuck in the period before the revival of respect for Johnson as a poet. With this kind of classic probably the best cover for ignorance is a flat assertion of badness. A very strong personality, by calling the book bad, can make those who have liked it feel guilty. Often, however, some kind of reason is needed. It is unlikely that you will have no

knowledge of the book at all. There is always some risk with hearsay, of course, imagining, for example, that moors in *Wuthering Heights* are like Moors in *Othello*, though even this would not be fatal unless you looked hangdog when you saw the effect of your slip, which you should face out, remembering that a generation of punsters in serious literature have shown that bad jokes should never be dismissed on sight. The best kind of condemnation is the kind that could conceivably be made by the others if they had thought of it—*Moby Dick* is a bad book not because it turns you up to think of harpooning the poor whales but because it deifies an obsession.

These approaches need a pretty firm conversational will, but the gentler intellectual climber can take the line that he has deliberately postponed reading the book until he has acquired enough experience to appreciate it. If a hostile companion asks why he could not read it earlier and re-read it when he had matured he should agree to do so, and next time he meets his persecutor refer wistfully to the pleasure of which his old age has been deprived.

Luckily the number of occasions on which you are faced with a direct question that forces you to reveal whether you have read a book are few; the danger is more that you may give yourself away by some injudicious piece of detail. Rash use of the affirmative in conversation has wrecked many a reputation. It is much safer to confine your intellectual discussions to the interrogative: "Wouldn't you say that I might be right in wondering whether this isn't one of those novels that . . .?"

When really cornered, quote French rapidly and unintelligibly in an accent that, though outrageously bad, is obviously not British.

R. G. G. PRICE

Cultural Examples

A Gathering of Fugitives. Lionel Trilling. Secker and Warburg, 18/-

The thinnest dividing line evidently exists in America between the serious intellectual approach to literature and the

popular commercial attitude that authors' "personal legends" enhance their creative importance: "Yeats, Eliot, Lawrence, Joyce, Proust, Gide, Rilke, Kafka—all have their place in the modern pantheon not only as writers but as personalities, as notable cultural examples." According to Professor Trilling, an intelligent American "wants only the Very Best, the *aure* that is certified by whatever literary Consumers' Union he subscribes to as having a top rating for spirituality, apocalypticity, and permanence," and the majority of these essays were addressed to something called The Readers' Subscription, while his commendations smack occasionally of the publisher's advertisement. Severe about "the shabby canting anti-Americanism of the intellectual middle-class of England" and "the provincial burgher's hurt vengeful pride which led . . . Graham Greene to write *The Quiet American*," heavily facetious in an appreciation of C. P. Snow, he patriotically contrasts European materialism with "the American preference for seeing the world as continuous with spirit." But what are the Harvard "Hasty Pudding Plays," in which George Santayana once acted?

J. M-R.

Miss Howard and the Emperor. Simone André Maurois. Collins, 18/-

Madame André Maurois's first essay in biography has produced a charming story about Esther Howard, née Elizabeth Anne Haryett of Brighton, who went to her grave as the Comtesse de Beauregard as a reward for financing the man who made her his lifelong mistress. It says much for Louis Napoleon that he inspired such constancy in a woman who must surely be the best-behaved of all mistresses, and how fortunate it was for them both that Miss Howard, practical Englishwoman that she was, had a nose for real estate investment.

Mme. Maurois's biographical grace presents a not unremarkable woman whose strength of character is revealed as equal to her sexual charm. Miserable indeed are Eugénie's Spanish capers when compared to the obstinacies of a Brighton shoemaker's daughter, whose dexterous use of that legendary English quality, common sense, gives her an almost historic distinction. Whatever one may think about Miss Howard's morals (and these, marriage contract aside, were very correct) one is filled with national pride at this record of retreat with dignity. Foreigners rarely handle such delicate creatures as emperors without histrionics: Miss Howard comes forward as yet another minor English heroine.

K. D.

Bulls in the Meadows. Peter Bull. Peter Davies, 16/-

The Meadows, Uxbridge Road, was the author's home during this account of his childhood, between 1912 and 1922, drawn largely from the copious diaries of his father, Sir William Bull, a devoted

family man who kept separate files on the characters of his four small sons. Conservative member for Hammersmith, he was an exuberant individualist, championing votes for women and the Channel Tunnel, writing election manifestoes in doggerel and during the war pinning a weekly news commentary to his gate.

His son's affectionate portrait of him is as revealing as his own self-searchings, which range from the comfort of abdominal belts to gloom about political advancement; but though the book reflects an unusually happy family, it leaves one with the feeling of having trespassed on a private circulation. The blend of public and domestic affairs, of the Irish question and nursery jokes, is awkward, and the author's interjections, such as "Anyone actually thrown up yet?" confirm this view. E. O. D. K.

The Sword of Pleasure. Peter Green. John Murray, 16/-

Sulla the Fortunate wrote memoirs, now lost; Mr. Green has reproduced them. The result is a penetrating psychological study of a successful and most unhappy man. This conflicts with the picture of Sulla the jolly rake which most of us have carried away from our schooldays, but the new version carries conviction. There are no orgies to tickle the salacious; domestic life, rather than awful goings-on, occupies the forefront of the book. In this reading Sulla resigned his Dictatorship out of misanthropic despair and hatred of his fellows.

Sulla's own words subtly reveal the blinding rage which made him a bloody tyrant; the mob is shown in all its grossness; but the author's greatest triumph is his depiction of aristocratic pride. We cannot easily understand why a Metellus believed himself more important than any ordinary freeborn Roman; Mr. Green has thought himself back into the past until he sees this clearly. Here is an understanding picture of the foundations of our culture, and a tale of adventure which carries the reader in mounting excitement to the end.

A. L. D.

The Golden Sovereign. Richard Church Heinemann, 18/-

The second volume of Mr. Church's autobiography is a sadder book than *Over the Bridge*. Its ten years, from 1910-1920, began with the end of his home life and closed with his own marriage. His Dickensian father, whose cure for melancholy was "Flap yourself, my boy!" found another wife, and became gradually estranged; his brother married. Living alone, ill-equipped to look after himself, his uncertainties dissolved only in his love of poetry and his conviction that he could write.

In 1910 he was seventeen. He sees his naïve early self with humour and clarity, a slightly morbid youth who was passionately filling in the gaps in his education,



"There's a rumour that Western Germany is making a take-over bid for us."

bungling his first love affair and finding among his fellow-clerks at the Customs House a rough-and-ready university. It is a sensitive portrait, but again one grows irritated by the casual references to levitation. Either he really flew to his work, in which case it would have been remarked, or he didn't. E. O. D. K.

AT THE PLAY

Roar Like a Dove (PHÆNIX)
Arlecchino
(LYRIC, HAMMERSMITH)

MISS LESLEY STORM has such confidence in her dialogue that in *Roar Like a Dove* she almost dispenses with plot, going cheerfully unarmed by any element of surprise. And up to a point she succeeds. This comedy of a baronial succession in the Highlands sails along from one good line to another, and not only because its crew happens to be particularly expert at making the most of a light wind; for the characters are well drawn and in excellent contrast. It is only towards the end of the second act that we realize the wind is dying, and that our mooring, always very clearly in sight, will be reached by the skin of our teeth.

For plot we have two clashes, which interlock. The first is that Lord Dungavel, an energetic young man who has worked up his decrepit estate into a going concern, wants a son, and takes a practical Aberdeen Angus view of his wife, an American who has patiently borne him six daughters in nine years though longing to take her tiara to London. An entirely devoted couple, but no number seven, says she. At their marriage her father had very reasonably begged her to give him a ring in California should she have any trouble with her limey lord, so

over comes Pop, and with him Mop, to dig their toes into this delicate situation. Here then is the second clash, between males who understand the importance of continuity and the great American matriarchy, for the fascinations of a pedigree herd soon range Pop unofficially on the side of paternity.

While Mop is firing her devastating broadsides into the feudal system Pop persuades his distracted son-in-law that no power on earth can stand up to such a combination of his countrywomen, and further persuades him to summon the second cousin next in succession to vet him for the future. This is disastrous. The cousin turns out urban, neurotic, and terrified by the appalling fertility of nature; wherever he goes on the estate something is being born, and he rushes back to the peaceful sterility of Mayfair. Pop's second bright thought, on which the play finally hinges, is an odd one; nothing less than that, the castle having been tactfully evacuated for the evening, Dungavel should, as it were, seduce his wife. Not a very pretty idea, and not, I thought, the sort of ploy which so nice a man as Dungavel would have entertained for a moment. I found the scene which followed a little embarrassing; if it had not been very lightly written and beautifully handled by Anne Kimbell and John McCallum it could easily have been offensive.

After that, alarms and excursions through a steadily weakening last act; but a boy. Inevitably, a boy. The faults of *Roar Like a Dove* are plain, but still it is a comedy amusing above the average. Miss Storm knows her background, she has a quick eye for detail, and she is well served by her sense of the ironic differences between the point of view of Europe and America. Her characters survive her satire to be likeable. And she is very lucky in her company. Three distinguished Americans bring the invaders complete authenticity. Marie Tempest came to mind in the pleasure of watching the marvellous timing of Evelyn Varden's comic attack. Her Mop is wonderful. Miss Kimbell makes the reluctant peeress a honey, and Paul McGrath's vital and distaff-weary Pop points the Atlantic difference splendidly. The last act recovers briefly in a memorable demonstration of two male attitudes to childbirth upstairs: all equally anxious, Pop grows sentimental, while his British colleagues mask their terror behind a brittle levity. Mr. McCallum's performance as Dungavel is on the same high level, and Anthony Ireland as the cynical cousin from the next glen and Peter Barkworth as the unlikely recruit from London fit helpfully into a production which Murray Macdonald has managed with an efficiency matching that of the Dungavel estate.

Originally *Il Servitore di Due Padroni*, *Arlecchino* was one of Carlo Goldoni's early plays for the Commedia dell' Arte. Its plot is a brisk tangle of misunderstandings, of wedding alarms, mixed-up lovers, the impersonation of a dead brother by his sister, and the manoeuvres of an agile lackey to look after two masters. Rapid movement is lubricated with asides, and it contains a famous scene in which the distracted valet is cornered into the juggling act of serving both his employers with dinner at the same time. No wit survives in the translation, if there was any to start with; the play is a skeleton script for the kind of rich miming and fooling at which the Latin theatre excels, and we don't. I believe an Italian company used it wonderfully at Edinburgh last year; the present English company has brought it to London from this year's "fringe," and makes a brave but unsuccessful shot at an alien tradition quite outside its reach.

ERIC KEOWN

AT THE OPERA

 Excerpts from *Cosi fan Tutte*, *Samson and Delilah* and *La Bohème* (SADLER'S WELLS)

THERE was a time when hot-pot of this sort, single acts on the same night from three operas by different composers in different genres, were occasions for which you put on your tiara or Garter ribbon and paid extra guineas. The excuse was usually a Royal jubilee, or a crowning, or Mafeking relieved; and most times there was a dominating diva, probably Nellie Melba, to give a semblance of unity to the mix.

No excuse at Sadler's Wells. Instead a grim reason. The autumn season had to be opened hot-pot fashion because the recent chorus strike made it impossible to rehearse anything full-out. Puccini's last act, Saint-Saëns's second act and Mozart's Act 1, part 2, were picked because chorussless in any case. Alexander Gibson, the strippling musical director of Sadler's Wells Opera, began his rostrum tenure with a creaky performance of Beethoven's *Fidelio* Overture. Listening to unkempt wind chords, I hoped Mr. Gibson would do better than this with *Samson* and *Bohème*. He did. Much better, in fact. His conducting of both was a technical joy.

The *Cosi* sample, weak in the tenor department and quite unspiced by the conductor, Edric Cundell, nevertheless got by because of a far more clinching *Come scoglio* (what a heart-breaking, bone-breaking display piece this is!) than we have any right to expect in London's second-line opera house. The singer was Patricia Bartlett. I load her with laurels.

In the Saint-Saëns bit, Charles Craig, a young newcomer to the Wells, sang Samson with the broad, free and plummy tenor tone, secure as Mr. Thorneycroft's underpinned pound, that we all crave for



Lady Dungavel—ANNE KIMBELL

Lord Dungavel—JOHN McCALLUM

and rarely get. Mr. Craig was dressed up, as has happened to Samsons away back to my boyhood, in a terra-cotta dressing-gown and a black wig and beard (all of one piece, apparently) like glossy stuffing bursting from a sofa. When he disinvigled himself from Delilah's couch proclaiming "But this is madness!" my first thought was that he had caught sight of himself in a mirror.

During the interval I found myself agreeing with several shrewd judges that Patricia Johnson has in her the makings of an historic English Delilah. Only one doubt occurs to me. That is, whether Delilah has much future. If many people feel as I do about Saint-Saëns's score, that its pious slickness becomes increasingly and offensively evident, Delilah will pack it in any time now. Meantime, Miss Johnson's Delilah promises well. Admittedly it is still distinctly a producer's job. When the lightning flickered she gave it a long, slow salute while doing a smooth half-turn. The intention was to register nervous distraction, but unexpected things happen to gesture-conventions when a singer has not yet worked them out from within.

In the *Bohème* finale the audience did not quite know which they relished the more—(a) Victoria Elliott's and Robert Thomas's rousing Mimi and Rudolph voices, or (z) the fooling of the four Bohemians, which needed only burst bags of flour to turn into a Glasgow rectorial rag. But even (z) was value for money.

CHARLES REID



AT THE PICTURES

A Hatful of Rain
Grand' Rue

DRUGS again," they say, and "That father's-favourite neurosis again"—as if that made any difference. Stories are about people, and the interaction of character, and the effectiveness of any cinematic telling of them depends on the skill with which they are told in film terms; and *A Hatful of Rain* (Director: Fred Zinnemann) is a thoroughly absorbing film which it is a stimulating pleasure to see. The fact that the central character is a drug addict is no more than the spring of the action, enabling the people concerned to display their individuality entertainingly in speech and behaviour. In innumerable Westerns the spring of the action has been that a man was an outlaw; the good ones were good, and the bad ones were bad, not because of that but because of the way they were done.

The addict here is a young man named Johnny Pope (Don Murray), and his wife Celia (Eva Marie Saint) does not know. His brother Polo (Anthony Franciosa), who does, lives with them; unable to bear the sight of Johnny's agony when deprived of the drug that keeps him apparently normal, he has spent all his own savings helping him to



Johnny Pope—DON MURRAY

[A Hatful of Rain]

get it. It is at this point that their bluff, unimaginative father (Lloyd Nolan) arrives, confident of getting from Polo a long-promised loan with which to start his own bar. Finding no money and no explanation, in outraged disappointment he blames Polo for being a waster; and later, told where the money went, he still blames Polo, for paying for the ruin of his favourite son.

The villains are the dope-peddler (Henry Silva), his strong-arm man and his giggling parasite, who are concerned only to extort a huge price from their victim and contemptuously toss a tiny packet of the drug for him to pick up from the floor when he—or rather Polo, by selling his car—at last manages to pay.

I have mentioned so many names because the acting is throughout so good. It is a strong, well-made film, with no hint of the cramping influence of a stage original, and the New York street, café, bar, park scenes and those incidental ones in, for instance, a lift or on the stairs of a block of flats are full of constantly interesting detail; but as I say, stories are about people, and the people here are nearly all memorable and convincing individuals. Miss Saint as the loving, anxious wife, Mr. Franciosa as the disappointed, good-hearted brother (he has one magnificently comic drunk scene), Mr. Nolan as the father who had always assumed that this sort of thing happened only to other people, are all admirable, and Mr. Murray's performance as the "hooked" victim himself is the more impressive for its restraint.

Now—do I have to change my opinion about dubbing? Either that, it seems, or I have to change my equally long-established view that if a film seems good

and enjoyable on the screen, everything that went on behind the screen, as it were, can be disregarded. The plain fact is that I thought highly of the French-language film *Grand' Rue* (Director: J. A. Bardem); and this has to be reconciled with the plain fact that, as it won the International Critics' Prize at last year's Venice Festival as a Spanish-language film called *Calle Mayor*, and as the American actress Betsy Blair is in it, a good deal of intricate dubbing must have gone on. This second fact, this time, I propose to ignore.

It is a simple, painful little anecdote about a practical joke. Some bored, insensitive, unimaginative men in a small Spanish town persuade a young newcomer to make the local spinster think he wants to marry her; by the time he realizes how broken she will be by the truth, things have gone too far, he cannot bring himself to tell her. The end is, as I say, painful; but Miss Blair's playing of the part has so touching a radiance, film-making skill keeps the eye and the mind so ceaselessly interested with fresh detail of scene and character, and the story is throughout so humanely told, that the last impression of the piece is not saddening but rewarding, satisfying.

* * * * *

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

In London: the harsh, impressive *The Witches of Salem* (11/9/57), Chaplin's *A King in New York* (25/9/57)—much funnier than all the preliminary talk had led us to expect—and dear old *Around the World in Eighty Days* (17/7/57), no problem for anybody.

Only new release reviewed here:
Yangtse Incident (17/4/57).

RICHARD MALLETT



ON THE AIR

The Desire and the Performance

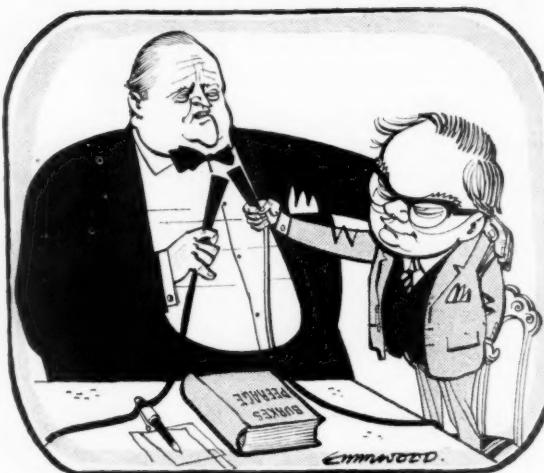
PANORAMA is back with us after its astivation, to show us once again how much less immediate, spontaneous, live, colourful, etc., etc., it is than *To-night*, and how earthbound is the majestic Mr. Dimbleby in comparison with the mercurial Mr. Michelmore. Let Mr. Michelmore, however, at once take wing; 'tis not of him I'm going to sing.

It has always seemed to me that a television critic, unless he has some parallel authority as a dramatic critic, is off-side if, when dealing with a television production of a play already established in the repertory, he ventures a new judgment on it *qua* play, rather than *qua* television production. Seeing two such plays on consecutive nights last week confirmed me in this belief. I don't think I am sticking my neck out too far if I venture to say that Ibsen's *Ghosts* is generally reckoned a masterpiece and Barrie's *The Twelve-Pound Look* a wilting bit of period *fâtiſſerie*. And yet *Ghosts*, whittled down to an hour for an ABC Sunday evening, came over as a ludicrous piece of *grand guignol* and *The Twelve-Pound Look* as an authentic work of what I can only call art.

The events of *Ghosts* moved with the improbable rapidity of old film comedies shown on modern projectors. Pastor Manders's changes of attitude followed one another as breathlessly as those of the two-headed man in the petrol advertisements. Mrs. Alving had no sooner refused to insure her orphanage than it was burning down. Barely had Oswald begun to play at ghosts with

RICHARD DIMBLEBY

CLIFF MICHELMORE



no more unacceptable than in (say) "The Princess Zoubaroff."

It is easy to argue that I haven't taken parallel cases, since the Ibsen play had to be slashed to fit while the Barrie was played exactly as written, but I don't think this will do. The Ibsen was a tough undertaking and the Barrie a simple one, but every undertaking must be matched with an effort appropriate to its difficulty. If a thing is not worth doing well, it is not worth doing.

The principle laid down above applies even more to broadcast opera. Luckily, in the case of last Thursday's broadcast of Strauss's *Salomé* the sound came over, at any rate on my set, so muddily that any temptation to assess the

performance as music was easily dismissed. One heard the voices of the principals, all singing in what was said to be English except Mr. Hasso Eschert, who only broke into English at intervals; and behind that was a kind of musical carpet in the design of which it was possible to recognize the shape of Strauss's glittering score. Visually, I found the production rather disconcerting; such improbable lecheries don't really stand up well to near examination, and though Miss Helga Pilareczky adorned her performance with a well-simulated blend of lust and mockery, and made the Dance of the Seven Veils more exciting than prima donnas mostly do, I would rather have seen her, two inches high, in the middle of a screenful of luscious bizarries.

B. A. YOUNG

After the colour pages of this issue went to press changes in cigarette prices were announced and Wills's "Three Castles" are now 4/4d.



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